THE EXAMINER.

ESTABLISHED 1808.

An Independent Weekly Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art.

No. 3,666.] *Registered at the General Post Office.*] SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1878. {PRICE ... ... 6d. BY POST ... ... 6½d.

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If I might give a short hint to an impartial writer it would be to tell him his fate. If he resolves to venture upon the dangerous precipice of telling unbiassed truth, let him proclaim war with mankind—neither to give nor to take quarter. If he tells the crimes of great men, they fall upon him with the iron hands of the law; if he tells them of virtues, when they have any, then the mob attacks him with slander. But if he regards truth, let him expect martyrdom on both sides, and then he may go on fearless.—DE FOE.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Court news ought always to take precedence of everything else. Can it really be true that a certain celebrated lion comique, who styles himself "the Champion Extempore Artist of the World," has forwarded to her Majesty a comic song of his own composing, containing, amongst others, these lines:—

> Roumania's dirty slurs, with Servian whelps and curs,
> Have helped to lame the plucky little bird;
> But a voice is heard at last, quite forgotten in the past,
> And the Lion stands erect to say a word.

Can it be really true that this has been done, and that Sir T. M. Biddulph, in her Majesty's name, has written to say that the verses are "appropriate," and that "Her Majesty fully appreciates his motives?" It is, we believe, no secret that the Queen pays Mr. Martin Farquahar Tupper the high compliment of considering him a great poet, and occasionally condescends to select for a royal present a handsomely bound volume of the 'Proverbial Philosophy.' There is not, however, much in common between the strains of Mr. Tupper and the soul-stirring "Tyrtæics"—as the *Daily Telegraph* ought to call them—of music-hall jingoism. Are we really to see a collected edition of the Macdermott war songs "dedicated by special request to her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen?" We are not "authorised to contradict" any such report. But we yet venture to take upon ourselves the responsibility of asserting that—whatever may be the canons of musical taste at Marlborough House—her Majesty is not and never has been unduly partial to music hall melodies. Her approval of the present lyric is entirely exceptional—assuming her to have approved of it all, as we are afraid we must believe she did.

Should we go to war it is clearly Russia's intention to let loose a fleet of privateers to prey upon our commerce. The *Cimbria*, now lying at South West Harbour, Maine, is as clearly a privateer as ever was the Alabama. She is a powerful steamer of 3,000 tons, belonging to the New York and Hamburg Line, and on Tuesday last *The Times* correspondent at Philadelphia telegraphed that she had been chartered at Hamburg by the Russian Government, had proceeded to a Russian port in the Baltic, and had there taken aboard 600 men, chiefly Finns, as steerage passengers, with sixty-three cabin passengers. From Hamburg she made her way to Maine, and on Wednesday we heard that she had been transmuted into a well-equipped, fully-manned Russian cruiser. "The steamer *Cimbria*," ran the next telegram, "still remains at South West Harbour, on the outer edge of Mount Desert, an island on the coast of Maine, forty miles from Bangor. All hands remain on board. The passengers are a regularly organised ship's company of the Russian Navy, commanded by Count Grifenberg, and numbering 660. These are separate from the steamer's crew, consisting of 110 Germans, under Captain Badenhausen. It is supposed that an answer to a cipher telegram, sent to St. Petersburg, is being awaited by Count Grifenberg. The officers on board the steamer decline to give any information about their destination, and the Russian Minister and Consul at New York equally avoid all questioning on the subject." On Thursday evening we learnt further that, according to all opinion both at Maine and Washington, it is intended, immediately war is declared, to let the *Cimbria* loose on a roving expedition. Meantime she is quietly lying in South West Harbour, "holding but little communication with the shore except to bring fresh provisions."

On the other hand, it is clear that the *Cimbria*, although practically a privateer, is in no way an offender against international law. She is as much a Russian man-of-war as are the ironclads that we have recently purchased English men-of-war. She is no pirate; nor have the Americans done anything wrong in allowing her to victual and coal. It is certain, indeed, that in all matters of marine international law we may trust the United States—however closely they may sail to the wind—to, at any rate, observe the strict letter of their obligations. They are too interested in the preservation and enforcement of international law to allow themselves willingly to break it. But, none the less, the prospect of a fleet of Cimbrias is not altogether a pleasant one for English shippers, merchants, and insurers, and for English commerce generally; nor is it any great consolation to know that it is in our power to fit out Cimbrias of our own.

The War Office is now in possession of the final returns from the various centres relating to the number of men of the First Class Army Reserve who have reported themselves, and the reasons which may account for the non-appearance of the absentees. The reports which have appeared from time to time show that the latter may be expected to form but a very small percentage of the whole body. In fact, the majority of cases may be accounted for by sickness, absence at sea, and other unavoidable causes. Doubtless it will be found that a few men have been re-enlisted, and that others who joined the Reserve under the old system, which enabled them to join and receive pay in more than one district, are absent from one centre because they have reported themselves

at another. Upon the whole, however, the men have answered to the call made upon them. Mr. Cardwell's scheme, which it is only fair to admit has been loyally carried out by Mr. Hardy, has thus been proved a sound one, and by the best possible test—that of practical success. Some time has yet to elapse before the full benefit of the system can be secured, but we know thus early that it will work well, and we believe that when it has been fully developed we shall have even greater reason to congratulate ourselves upon the judgment and foresight of the late Liberal War Minister.

The native troops which were despatched from Bombay at the beginning of the week are, it appears, to be followed by further draughts. A number of other regiments have at least been ordered to hold themselves in readiness for embarkation. Apart altogether from the political merits of the step which has been initiated, it is now evident that we can draw, if we choose, to a very great extent upon India for troops for our first or fighting line, and that they are likely to prove of infinite value. It is also clear that there is no objection on the part of native troops to serving in Europe, but that, on the contrary the idea is popular, and that we can draw any number of soldiers from our Indian army as we require them. Nor need there be any doubts as to the quality of these troops. It is not too much to say that, disciplined and led by English officers, and properly handled, they will prove themselves the equals of the troops of any other nation in the world. There are plenty of men yet living who remember the battle of Chillian Wallah where the Sikh Horse charged with a desperate valour never to be forgotten, and where a single English infantry regiment lost in one hour's fighting more than five hundred men and officers. Brave as the Sikhs, however, then showed themselves, they met with their match in the little Goorkhas, of whom it was said that they vied in headlong courage with our own troops, and armed with their short weapons were a terror to the Sikhs. One of the battalions (the Sinnoor) which won this high praise at Aliwal is now on its way to Malta. Perhaps, however, the point which has been least emphasised is the great addition upon which we can rely to what is at present the weakest arm of our service, the cavalry.

It is said that if the decision rested with the spinners instead of the weavers the cotton strike would be stopped at once; and the reason alleged for this confidence is an instructive one. The spinners are the only operatives in the cotton trade who ever attempted production on their own account, though, as we anticipated last week, their enterprise assumed the joint-stock rather than the co-operative form. The difference, however, did not affect their capacity to pronounce judgment in a labour dispute. Whether as co-operators pure and simple or merely as joint-stock holders, they have acquired a knowledge of trade questions such as the weavers as a body cannot boast of. Unlike their comrades in this disastrous strike, they fully appreciate the difficulties against which the employers have to contend; hence their almost unanimous advice to the weavers to accept the masters' terms. A few days since the spinners' representatives from Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire passed a resolution to that effect at a great meeting at Manchester. The attempt was useless. In the strike district alone the weavers number upwards of 100,000 as against 10,000 spinners, and the question will be decided by count of heads rather than quality of brain. At Burnley about nine-tenths of the spindles have been stopped. On Thursday morning several hundreds more came out on strike at Preston, and at that town, as also at Blackburn, the feeling between the employers and the operatives has been further embittered by mobbing, window-smashing, egg-throwing, and other forms of rioting. Several mills are guarded by the police, while others are being closed, as the masters say, on account of the terrorism which the weavers exercise over the spinners. At Darwen, again, the hands have held a mass-meeting advocating war to the knife. And, lastly, the masters have declined Messrs. Whalley and Birtwistle's proposal for arbitration by two cloth merchants, two shipping agents, two bankers, and two delegates from the respective sides, with the Bishop of Manchester, or some one else, for referee. Nothing, it seems, can prevent a general strike and lock-out on Wednesday next, when all the notices expire.

Another element in the Strike is the recent growth of a formidable, though not necessarily fatal competition, on the part of foreign countries, in the very industry in which English workmen have been regarded as unapproachable. It is stated that "the producing capacity of our mills is still greater by twenty-five per cent. than that of all their foreign rivals put together." But, within the last few days, journals that once scorned the very idea of foreign rivalry have admitted that it is steadily gaining upon us. Our American custom has fallen off enormously; and a Manchester merchant states that for the last two or three years we have been importing American calicoes at the rate of 30,000 pieces a week. Our continental custom is stated to be not any larger now than it was seventeen years ago. Europe and America are supplying their own wants, and our chief market is the East, where, however, the Indian mills are bidding against us in the department of coarse goods. It is also alleged that the wages of the American spinners and weavers are, taken all round, not higher than those paid to English operatives, and the statement, if true, deserves to be taken note of. It would be absurd to argue that this necessarily forebodes the decay of the English cotton trade; but it certainly goes to show that our manufacturers will henceforth be obliged to maintain their traditional supremacy under new conditions.

When Parliament meets it will be not a little surprised to find that public business is in its usual state of backwardness. When we look at the list of Government measures, which are all of sufficient importance to be passed this session, we find the utmost difficulty in saying that any of them, except the most insignificant, will be rescued from the Herodian massacre which invariably concludes each session. The Cattle Plague Bill, which is in a fair stage of progress in the Upper House, will be roughly handled in the Commons. We scarcely think that, considering the fierce opposition which it is sure to provoke, time will be found for it. Indeed, it is hardly possible for Ministers to get a fair chance of passing it unless they modify one or two of its most stringent provisions. The Bill for Abolishing Tolls in Scotland may pass; indeed, unless Mr. Cross means to drive the Scottish members into the ranks of the "Obstructionists," it must pass. The Irish Sunday Closing Bill is a semi-ministerial measure now; but it can only make progress if its promoters are prepared to force it on by twenty-six hours' sittings. As for the County Government Bill it has got into committee, and there it has stuck fast. That is always the way with Ministerial measures affecting local government reform. They are introduced with a mighty flourish of trumpets, and then in committee drop into obscurity from which they never emerge. Knowing as we do the amount of enthusiasm that exists in the Cabinet for county government reform, we shall be very much surprised if, with all their present excuses for neglecting it, their County Government Bill will get sent up to the Lords. The Valuation Bill, about whose importance Mr. Sclater Booth spoke in almost affecting terms last session, has not been heard of by anybody this year. As for the Highway Bill, nobody knows what has become of it. Sir John Holker's Act for Codifying the Criminal Law is still *in nubibus*; and making due allowance for the time which the Eastern Question must consume, it does not seem improbable that the Government will be able to go to the country boasting that they have passed as many as two great measures this session—the Mutiny Bill and the Factories' and Workshops' Act.

The decision of the Court of Appeal on the Hertford College case must, we suppose, be accepted as sound law. Anyhow it is not for laymen to question the unanimous judgment of Lord Coleridge and Lords Justices Baggallay, Bramwell, and Brett. We must accept their ruling as they give it;

but, at the same time, it is impossible to ignore the fact that their lordships have virtually made the Tests Act altogether inoperative. They, in effect, tell us that any college at Oxford or Cambridge may accept or create any number of new fellowships with any or every sort of sectarian restriction. If a wealthy Roman Catholic chooses to make a present to Merton of thirty fellowships strictly limited to Roman Catholics, and if Merton chooses to accept the gift, there is no power in the law to declare the transaction void, or to prevent Merton being transformed into a Catholic college, with a Catholic majority in its governing body. Similarly we run the chance of seeing Nonconformist, Jewish, Comtist, or even Atheist colleges. If this be so, it can only be said that the Tests Act has made things rather worse than they were before—a not uncommon result of Acts of Parliament. Meantime all that we can do is to wait patiently until the next general election, and then take care that something is done to render the Tests Act a reality.

Mr. Mundella's bill to Protect Fresh Water Fisheries is based upon the theory of an extension of those clauses of the Thames Acts which protect the fish in that river, by according "fence" months, and by prohibiting netting with undersized meshes. But Mr. Mundella seems to forget that there are such things as private fisheries, and if his bill were to become law in its present state a man might not do as he willed even with his own. Fresh water fisheries may be classed in three sorts: firstly, open fisheries, such as the Thames; secondly, rivers which are private property in separate stretches of water. In such as these it is obvious that an improvident proprietor might unfairly prejudice the interests of his neighbours up and down stream by undue netting or by destruction of fish out of season. Lastly, there are private ponds and lakes. It is this last class of which Mr. Mundella seems to take no notice. Suppose an owner of a lake, which is stocked or which he wishes to stock with trout, is also infested by roach or jack. Roach prey on trout spawn, and jack on the young trout. He will want to kill them down or to net them out, even to the smallest. The latter he may never do under Mr. Mundella's Act, the former he may not do at the season which is best adapted for exterminating mischievous coarse fish, viz., the spawning season, when they lie in the shallows. If Mr. Mundella wishes to escape elaborate opposition to his bill he must make some exception in the case of private pools, and must also modify to some extent (though, perhaps, without *carte blanche*) his restrictions in the case of rivers upon which riparian proprietors exercise exclusive rights of fishing for a certain distance.

THE PROGRESS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

During the last fortnight the position of affairs has not, in as far as the public are aware, been materially altered. Owing, in some measure, to the Easter holidays, and, partly, to the illness of the two Chancellors, there has been a sort of lull in the progress of the negotiations. We would fain hope, too, that, as the probability of war has become more imminent, the governments of Europe have become more keenly alive to the magnitude of the evils which must attend any rupture between England and Russia. At any rate, we have not perceptibly drifted much nearer towards war within the last week or two, and, in the present critical condition of affairs, this in itself is matter for congratulation. Owing to Parliament not being in Session we know even less than we have known heretofore concerning the course of the negotiations on which the issue of peace or war seems to depend. It is, however, certain that efforts are still being made by the Neutral Powers to facilitate a pacific solution of the Anglo-Russian difficulty. What are the motives which have caused Germany to abandon her attitude of inaction it is needless now to enquire. This much is certain, that the Government of Berlin has exerted itself actively to secure the meeting of the Congress. It may be that Prince Bismarck expects through the agency of a Congress to be enabled to carry out designs opposed to the interests of England, and which must, therefore, prove indirectly hostile to the maintenance of peace. The ultimate aims and ends of the German Chancellor's policy do not form the question we have now to consider. All we have to think of for the time being is whether the assembling of a Congress would or would not increase the prospect of our being able to remain at peace consistently with our own honour and welfare. If any reliance whatever can be placed upon the declarations of our Ministers—declarations which have been repeated this week with renewed emphasis by Mr. Hardy and Mr. Cross—our national policy is to seek peace by all honourable means. We are never tired of declaring our unwillingness to go to war. We represent ourselves as resolved not to fight unless war is forced upon us. We are bound, therefore, to welcome any opportunity which affords a prospect, however slight, of peace being preserved. Now it is obvious that the meeting of a Congress does afford such a prospect. Even those who are least sanguine as to its results, who distrust most strongly the sincerity of its advocates, and who realise to the fullest the many obstacles in the way of its being brought to a successful issue, must admit that if a Congress should meet there is still a hope that war may be averted, while if it does not meet war is certain. We hold, therefore, that if there is any reality in the pacific professions of our Government, they are bound, by respect for their own utterances, to assist in every way the efforts of Germany to render possible the assemblage of the Congress.

Prince Bismarck has based his exertions on the understanding that both Russia and England should give a practical guarantee of their desire for peace. At the present moment the Russian army and the British fleet are virtually facing each other in front of Constantinople, each being apparently resolved to employ force if necessary to hinder the other from effecting a footing at Stamboul. In such a position of affairs an act of violence on the part of any subordinate officer, a misunderstanding between two commanders, or even a mere accidental occurrence may suffice at any moment to bring about a collision and thus render war inevitable. Moreover, while Constantinople is practically blockaded by the Russians by land and by the English by sea, the Congress, even if it should meet, would have its hands tied, and would be precluded from recommending any solution which would involve the conferring of any military advantage on one of the two beleaguers of the Bosphorus. Thus, the relief of Stamboul from its practical investment is an essential preliminary to the meeting of the Congress. The German Chancellor, with his wonted clearness of vision, has recognized the hard facts which lie at the bottom of the diplomatic controversy, and has employed all his influence to bring about a simultaneous withdrawal of the two hostile or *quasi*-hostile forces. His proposal is understood to be that the Russian armies should retire to Adrianople and that the British squadron should sail back to Besika Bay. This proposal is objected to by both parties alike. The Russians allege that if they should withdraw from the shores of the Bosphorus the Turks would seize the opportunity of their departure to fortify the approaches to Constantinople, and thus to render the city impregnable. England, on the other hand, asserts that if her fleet were to pass out of the Dardanelles she might find the passage closed on her return, and might therefore be precluded from offering any effective resistance to a Russian advance on the city of the Sultan. Both objections are sound if the objectors are resolved on war, but they have no force if the Congress has any likelihood of eventuating in a peaceful solution. All sorts of ingenious stipulations and arrangements have been devised in virtue of which the two opposing forces might be secured the possibility of resuming their old positions in the event of the Congress breaking down. To speak the plain truth, however, all these devices seem to us very futile. No power of resumption can ever be equivalent to actual possession. If the Congress should end in a declaration of war between England and Russia one of the two Powers will infallibly be in a worse position at the outset than it would have occupied if it had never abandoned its present station. This seems to us certain. Nor do we wish to shirk the fact that of the two

Powers England is more likely to be the loser than Russia. If England is resolved to go to war with Russia she would unquestionably do unwisely to acquiesce in any arrangement by which her fleet might be excluded from the Sea of Marmora.

The whole question, however, turns upon this point, are we or are we not resolved to go to war? If, as we have hitherto purposed, we only contemplate the eventuality of war as a remote and unwelcome contingency, then it is clearly worth our while to facilitate any arrangement by which war may possibly be averted, even at the risk that by so doing we may somewhat diminish our power of attack in the event of our not having to fight after all. If, on the other hand, we propose to enter on a war with Russia for the purpose of liberating Turkey from Muscovite ascendancy, then we should obviously be unwise to sacrifice an advantageous strategical position. What we wish to point out is that the refusal of our Government to withdraw the fleet to Besika Bay, whether wise or unwise in itself, can only be justified on the theory that we intend to wage not a defensive but an offensive war. For the protection of purely British interests, for the defence of our communications with India by the way of Egypt, we should be equally strong whether our fleet was stationed outside or inside the Dardanelles. Indeed, we should practically be stronger in the former case than in the latter. But if we contemplate something more than this, if we propose to drive the Russians back across the Danube if not across the Pruth, to expel them from Armenia, and to recapture Kars, then undoubtedly we should be less able to carry out our purpose if our fleet was excluded from the Sea of Marmora. Thus we are forced to the conclusion that the objections raised by our Government to any simultaneous withdrawal of the Russian army and the English fleet must be based upon an intention of waging an offensive war against Russia in the case of the Czar's not complying with our demands. It is well that this truth should be brought home clearly to the public mind. The war in which we are about to be engaged, if it should take place at all, will not be a mere military demonstration, but a deliberate trial of strength between England and Russia. If due cause could be adduced we should not shrink from such a trial; but, until far greater cause is shown than has yet been shown, we may ask, without any imputation of want of patriotism, whether it is worth our while to undertake a second Crimean war single-handed and without allies. Turkey is prostrated by her late disasters; Austria is manifestly preparing to come to terms with Russia; and Germany sides not with us but against us. This being so, it is difficult to see what we can hope to gain, even if our attack on Russia should prove successful; while, if it should prove unsuccessful, it is equally difficult to say what we might not lose. Common sense, therefore, would seem to dictate that we should, to say the least, insist on no conditions which might preclude the possibility of a Congress meeting. This seems to us the point to which those who, like ourselves, distrust the necessity for or the expediency of a war with Russia should direct their efforts. Mr. Bright's speech at Manchester, able and eloquent as it was, laboured under the fatal defect of being based on principles which England, as a nation, is not prepared to accept. The arguments which the member for Birmingham employed would tell with almost equal force against any war that ever has been waged, and would lead logically to the conclusion that a nation was never justified in resorting to war for the defence of her interests and her honour. This conclusion, whether right or wrong in principle, is one which, in practice, would be repudiated by the almost unanimous consent of Englishmen. With scarcely an exception, we as a nation are prepared to fight with Russia or with any other Power if adequate cause can be shown. The whole question is whether such cause has been shown, or can be shown. We are justified, therefore, in asking that, before we resort to arms, we should at least try the experiment whether the necessity for war may not be averted by submitting the points at issue between ourselves and Russia to the consideration of a Congress. And in insisting on this demand we shall have, unless we are much mistaken, the support of all thinking Englishmen.

EASTER SPEECHES.

During the past week we have had no lack of speech-making on the Eastern policy of the Government. Mr. Cross has been sent to Preston to tell us "We don't want to fight." But, that the war party may be comforted, Mr. Hardy has been despatched to Bradford to bellow, "but by Jingo if we do," &c. Mr. Bright, again, aided by Mr. Chamberlain, has been put forward to expound the views of the men of Peace. The Secretary for India may be correct in declaring that he himself does not want war. But it is certain what he says is trumpeted about the country by the fire-eaters as a proof that the Government is with them. If Mr. Hardy does not want war, what does he want? Except on the hypothesis that he is eager to fight Russia, his speech at Bradford is simply an ebulition of "sound and fury signifying nothing." It conveys no clear idea of the attitude of our Government to the Eastern controversy, unless that attitude be bellicose. It gives us not the faintest glimmer of their policy, unless that policy be one of hair-brained military adventure. Of what good is it to rave about the iniquity of Russia? We all know she is as yet scarcely a civilised power. But then, bad as she is, we also know that she is a hopefully progressive Power, and in every degree preferable to the savage, undisciplined and crumbling Empire, to whose wasteful reign in Europe she has practically put an end. What use is it to stamp and storm because Russia has violated the Treaty of Paris? Of course she has done so, and so has Turkey, and so have we, and so has everybody that ever actively meddled with the Eastern Question since the said Treaty was signed. The French did it in the Druse-Maronite *imbroglio* when they occupied Syria. Europe practically did it when it sent a Conference to Constantinople to meddle with the internal administration of Turkey, and in effect subjected her government to a sort of criminal trial without letting its representatives be present when the indictment against it was being discussed. England did it when she sent war ships into the Sea of Marmora in defiance of the protest of the Porte.

Then there can be no doubt the Treaty of San Stefano is very objectionable. Everybody says so, and can say so without, like Mr. Hardy, breaking out upon it after the manner of a "semi-despondent fury." Indeed, Mr. Gladstone has condemned the document in no unmeasured language, only his criticism differs a little from that of Lord Salisbury and the Secretary for India. It is strong where theirs is curiously feeble. It hits the really black blots, the provisions relative to Roumania and Greece, in the arrangement-provisions which the two ministers pass over with what seems meek indifference when compared with their violence in regard to matters of trivial detail. Of course, Russia must not be allowed to settle the Eastern Question without letting England and Europe have a voice in the matter. But Mr. Hardy seems to think he and his friends are the only people in the world on whose minds this doctrine has dawned. Yet, as a matter of fact, Russia herself has again and again accepted it. She did so ere the war began, and has done so many a time since. Before a single soldier crossed the Danube she told us what she might ask if forced to cross the Balkans. Lastly, when the San Stefano Treaty was signed it was distinctly called a "Preliminary Treaty." Not the smallest pretence was ever made of making it a "final" one, or of forbidding Europe to revise it. Mr. Hardy does not seem to be aware that the keynote of the Liberal policy has been the prevention of a Russian settlement of the Eastern Question. It was to deprive her of having even a chance of as much as initiating such a settlement that Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville were willing to step in and actively rescue her oppressed subjects from the torture of the Pashas. It is because Mr. Hardy and people of his way of thinking were deaf to all warnings, and frustrated every attempt to ward off Russian coercion from Turkey, that Russia is in the position of vantage to-day that enables her friends to cry *Beati possidentes*. Mr. Hardy himself more than any man in England is responsible for this state of matters. Who has forgotten how he demonstrated that even the Treaties of Paris and London did not oblige us to interfere? Did he not mockingly ask Mr. Gladstone and

Lord Granville where was their mandate from Heaven to undertake a non-Russian crusade in Bulgaria? If we are to believe Mr. Hardy's assertion, that he does not now and never has wanted to go to war for the purpose of buttressing Turkey, then from the beginning he has hopelessly and fatally blundered. There were but two ways of settling the Eastern Question. If Turkey despised our advice and that of Europe as she did it was inevitable she would be "coerced" by somebody. The question for Mr. Hardy to decide was, should Russia be allowed to coerce her or should England step in and equitably settle the difficulty herself by peaceful pressure if possible, by force if necessary. He deliberately elected to let Russia do the work. And now he goes about the country gnashing his teeth because the consequences that he was warned must follow from his folly are staring him in the face!

Mr. Bright's review of the policy of the Government must have been felt to be damaging because Mr. Cross has tried to reply to it in detail. We are not surprised at that. Mr. Bright spoke bitterly because he felt that the Ministry had duped him and his colleagues when they sent the House of Commons away with pacific assurances and the very day after ordered Indian troops to Europe to protect "interests" for whose safety British manhood alone has hitherto proved a sufficient guarantee. He sees very clearly that, in spite of their soft words, the Ministry are either drivelling pedants or resolute fighting men, and in either case it is irritating to be governed by them. If they do not mean to attack Russia, then to object to go into Congress, when a formula has been devised which in the opinion of the rest of Europe sufficiently asserts the rights of the co-signatories to the Treaty of Paris, must mean war or nothing. If it mean nothing, then is not the mischief and the misery caused by the ministerial policy enough to make the meekest of men angry with them? Mr. Cross, who politely disposed of his opponent's criticism a little time ago by saying "there was a lying spirit abroad," is shocked at the strong language Mr. Bright uses. But the time has come when other people besides Mr. Hardy and Mr. Cross may fairly claim a little license of speech. We have nothing to do with Mr. Bright's Quaker opinions, and we do not share his general views upon the sinfulness of war. The question is, does Mr. Bright give good common-sense reasons, such as people opposed to peace at any price might give, to prove that at the present moment there is not the shadow of a dispute between England and Russia which would justify a war for its settlement? In answer to this question let it be first noted that Mr. Cross and Mr. Hardy now both abandon their old plea of acting solely for "British interests." The quarrel they say we have with Russia is that she will not recognise European law and the Treaty rights of her co-signatories. But, as Mr. Hardy asked, amidst the cheers of Ministerialists last session, what mandate from Heaven allows us to go about the world crusading on behalf of the rights of people who will not even help us to look after their own interests? Europe is quite easy in mind about her public law, besides if Lord Beaconsfield's dogma be correct, and insular England has become an Asiatic, not a European, Power, surely there is all the less reason why Mr. Cross should distress himself about our prospects. Yet we quite agree with the Home Secretary and Mr. Hardy, who have been so tardily converted to this belief, that we have other than mere "British interests" in the Eastern Question. We are glad to see that Mr. Cross at last seems anxious to uphold our right to have a voice in the settlement of it. We quite agree with him that England ought to try to get that voice spoken in Congress as soon as possible. Then, it will be asked, wherein do we differ from the Home Secretary? The reply is easily given. We would act where he talks. We would not assume that Europe was ignorant of European law and right. We would assume rather that, when every nation but England was satisfied that the German formula of invitation did not concede Russia's mythical pretensions to tamper with that right and law, going into Congress could not possibly be so dangerous to British interests and the peace of mankind as sulking outside its doors must be. Now, as heretofore, it is Mr. Hardy's want of clear vision that is leading him astray. As for Mr. Cross, we cannot explain his meaning at all. If he would do what he says the Opposition would propose if in power, why does he not do it? It is as plain as possible that they would be quite ready to accept the last German invitation to Congress, but, so far from saying he would do likewise, Mr. Cross does not even favour us with his objections to such a course.

RUSSIAN FINANCE.

The demands recently made by Russia on Europe are certainly not distinguished by an excess of modesty. Nothing perhaps commands our sympathy more than the spectacle presented by an individual struggling to keep his head above water and disembarrass himself of his pecuniary difficulties. But our tolerance and good nature stop short at a Micawber, who thanks the Deity that he has liquidated a debt when he gives his creditor an I O U. Russia is simply a Micawber multiplied by some seventy millions. For the last three years she has been adding a magnificent top story to her already collossal edifice of indebtedness. To keep the structure from tumbling down with a crash, she has borrowed with a regularity and calm persistence that has made a new Russian loan looked for, as each year came round, as a necessary supplement to one of the four seasons; and she has now engaged the services of M. Mendelssohn to secure a further little advance of 12,000,000*l.* in Paris or any other convenient centre of "financial syndicates." We know nothing of the advantages which will accrue to those who may respond to the present appeal. The palmy days when prospectuses bristling with such matters were served up with our breakfast gave way some time ago to a different order of things, and we have now to rest satisfied with the mere rumour of conditions. As to the terms of this new loan, M. Mendelssohn is said to have varied them considerably since his representations to the Comptoir d'Escompte received only a cold reception. But, as the last operation was effected at the price of something like fifty per cent., the present transaction, wherever it may be completed, is not likely to prove more profitable. How it came about that M. Mendelssohn failed to obtain the required advance in Paris is not difficult of explanation, any more than is the fact that Amsterdam, which is notoriously an insatiable absorber of the refuse of international borrowings, has not been applied to for subscriptions in the present instance. Fail, however, he did; and, having fruitlessly hawked the loan about Europe, he has now carried it to New York. Little success awaits him there, seeing that the rage for fantastic speculations has so far subsided of late that people are now putting all their spare capital into United States Government Bonds, which have been bought up in this market to the extent of several millions sterling during the last month or six weeks. There is, on the other hand, a price at which people will take up anything, and, as Russia is not in a position to hold out over a question of a few per cent. in the issue price, so she may so far modify her terms as to secure the floating of the loan. To her the necessity for present hard cash is of infinitely more importance than any considerations respecting her future means for repaying either the capital or the interest. The problem she has to solve loses none of its difficulties when dissociated from the prospect of her going to war with England; and it is not worth while examining the situation in its combined aspect. It may, therefore, be sufficient if, in order to get an approximately correct idea of what the country has actually before her, we take a glance at her liabilities as just stated by the *St. Petersburg Gazette* and *Bourse Gazette*—journals not likely to be suspected of speaking with unwarranted gloom on the subject—and contrast them with existing disposable resources.

We find, then, that the interest bearing debt (exclusive of the 3,000,000*l.* Internal Loan raised in March last, which has not been allowed for), amounts to 268,950,000*l.*, the Railway Loans to 83,400,000*l.*, non-interest bearing debt (forced paper currency) to 155,600,000*l.* (40,000,000*l.* being the amount borrowed from the Imperial Bank), and the Land Mortgage debt to 88,300,000*l.*, making together a total of 759,550,000*l.*—a figure that looks uncommonly like that

which forms a proud boast amongst a certain class of British patriots. When we bear in mind that at the beginning of 1876 the interest bearing debt of Russia amounted to little more than one hundred and eighty millions sterling, and the note circulation to a trifle over one hundred and thirteen millions sterling, a tolerably good idea will be framed as to the energy and activity displayed by Russia in developing the debtor side of her account while readjusting affairs in the East of Europe. During the time she was mobilising she raised three internal loans amounting to 52,500,000*l.*, and one foreign loan for 14,500,000*l.* Everything being ready by the end of March, 1877, the campaign began on the 12th April and terminated on the 4th March last, a further 53,000,000*l.* in this interval of three hundred and twenty-two days being added to the debt.

Turning to the last accounts published—those for 1876, the charge for the public debt was set down at 15,035,000*l.* For 1878 it is estimated at 19,000,000*l.* But as in this last estimate no allowance is made for the fresh loans raised since the estimate was made, nor for the loss which will be incurred from the fall in the exchange of nearly fifty per cent., nor, again, for the diminution in the net earnings of the Railways which have to be made good out of the national Exchequer, an addition of five millions sterling to the above figure will make it approximate more nearly to the final result. With respect to the resources at the command of Russia, very little can be said that is satisfactory. Up to a certain point her revenue shewed remarkable elasticity; but, as the tax-paying power of the population has been strained to its utmost limits, the imposition of additional fiscal burdens —much as they may be spoken of—would be altogether ineffective. The ordinary revenue for the current year is set down at 78,103,000*l.*, and the ordinary expenditure at 80,884,000*l.*, the calculated deficit being close on 3,800,000*l.* We know nothing of the extraordinary revenue and expenditure, and we doubt if the Minister of Finance is much better informed, but we do know that the anticipations embodied in these figures are based on the results of 1876, and we further know that since the latter year the commercial and industrial interests of the country have been terribly disorganised. And, as an instance of what has be to be looked for when the accounts are published, we now only draw attention to the reduction in 1877 of close on 3,500,000*l.* in the customs receipts as compared with the previous year. A similar state of things is noticeable in other directions, and it is hardly necessary to do more than draw attention to the one broad fact we have indicated to disclose the manifest absurdity of the last-framed budget. With an actual revenue which in recent years has ranged between sixty and seventy million sterling Russia, in order to meet the interest on her debt, has been a borrower to the extent of close on ten million per annum. Many of the later loans were ostensibly raised for railway purposes; but it requires a mere superficial examination of the Government outlay in this direction to see how little, comparatively speaking, this branch of the national expenditure has had to do with the disbursements of the proceeds of the loans. In fact, up to January, 1877, the total outlay of the Government in the form of guaranteed interest and direct advances for construction and maintenance to railway companies amounted to no more than 96,300,000*l.*, against which they received bonds and shares to the value of 28,000,000*l.*

To provide for the service of a debt of such dimensions as that of Russia it is essential not only that there should be an inherent spirit of thrift in the people, but that the Government should be animated by a thorough appreciation of the national requirements and possess the requisite wisdom and means to put in motion the machinery needful for attaining the end sought. What the mass of the Russian population is like in respect of thrift we can, apart from other evidence, judge from the fact that out of an estimated revenue for 1877 of 77,000,000*l.* the yield from the excise alone is set down at 34,500,000*l.*, or nearly 50 per cent. of the total. This is seven millions more than is returned by our own excise duties, and the comparison becomes more striking when regard is had to the fact that, out of a population of seventy-seven millions, sixty-four millions are rural, seven millions town, and the rest floating, while the total national income has been estimated at less than six hundred millions sterling per annum, or less than 8*l.* per head of population. And again, with respect to the wisdom of the Government in fostering and developing the resources of the country and the few industrial aptitudes of the people, we can only say that the first are frittered away in grand military displays, the construction of strategic railways, and official peculations, and the second are weighted by a fiscal system so old and ridiculous in its conception, and so stunting in its operation that even China has abandoned it. If Russia paid more heed to these matters than to aggrandising expeditions the benefit to her would be incalculable. But it would seem that the acquisition of territories inhabited by semi-barbarians has greater charms for her than legitimate measures for elevating her own people and staving off bankruptcy. She has profited very little by the savage hordes she has taken to her bosom, for out of eighty-three governments or provinces thirteen cost her annually six millions sterling, Trans-Caucasus two and three-quarter millions sterling, and Warsaw one million sterling. The old Manchester school of economists were only happy when they saw bullion flowing into the country, welcoming its arrival as a something which could be directly eaten and put upon one's back. And it is not too much to say that, to her injury, and substituting barren plains, snow-clad mountains, and tribes of Arab filibusters for bullion, Russia is about the last surviving representative of an effete nation.

THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION.

The first of May has come and gone. The Paris Exhibition has been opened with all due pomp and ceremony. Marshal MacMahon is still President of the French Republic, and there is peace in Europe. Six months ago long odds would probably have been offered against the May day of 1878 witnessing the triple combination of events to which we have alluded, and the fact that there has as yet been no revolution in France and no war in Europe may serve as some encouragement to those who are disposed to despair of the influence exerted by common sense and right feeling on mundane affairs. As to the inaugural ceremony, by which the Exhibition was declared open, there is not much to be said that requires saying. The weather was unfavourable; the building is but partially completed; the wares to be displayed are still half unpacked; and the world at large has been too much occupied by other matters to give much heed hitherto to an industrial show. As a mere pageant, therefore, the opening of the Exhibition proved a failure, though a good deal too much has been made by newspaper reporters of the petty mishaps which are inseparable from First Night performances, both on and off the stage; while too little has been said of the really extraordinary features of this International Bazaar. In vastness of area, in the variety of its Courts, in the richness of its artistic and industrial treasures, the Exhibition of 1878 will surpass all its predecessors; and we doubt whether its success is likely to be seriously compromised even by the outbreak of an Anglo-Russian war. If the position of affairs had been as threatening at the commencement of the year as it is to-day, the manufacturers of the Old World and the New would probably have hesitated about sending samples of their wares to Paris. But now the articles to be displayed are on the spot. War or no war, the Exhibition will remain open during the summer; and even if a conflict should take place between Russia and Great Britain, the fighting in the first instance must necessarily be carried on in a remote corner of Europe, and will not be of a kind to interfere with the facilities of communication between the Neutral Powers. Under these circumstances people will go out holiday-making much as usual in the summer months, and the Exhibition of Paris will not be shorn of its full complement of visitors. In fact, all predictions to the contrary notwithstanding, the *Exposition Universelle* is well nigh certain of success as a Mart of Industry. Whether Exhibitions are in the long run useful or otherwise is an open question; but, as Exhibitions go, the one now commencing its career at Paris will hold and more than hold its own. That this should be so is an advantage to interests of far wider and graver import

than those of the traders who have furnished the contents of this industrial palace.

From a philosophical point of view the merits or demerits of Republican institutions have no connection whatever with the success or failure of the Exhibition now being held under the auspices of the French Republic. Pure reason, however, does not regulate the fluctuations of popular opinion, and, as a matter of fact, the influence of the Republic in France would have been considerably impaired if the Exhibition had broken down. Its collapse would, however illogically, have been taken as showing that, even as an industrial Power, France could not occupy as prominent a place under the Republic as she did under the Empire; and therefore all the opponents of the Republican Government of France lost no opportunity of showing their want of sympathy for the Exhibition. The world of rank and fashion in Paris held aloof from the opening ceremony, and the Marshal-President would have had but a scanty gathering if it had not been for the presence of the Royal Princes who had come to give their countenance to the show. The cheers with which the representatives of Royalty were greeted by the crowd assembled at the Champ de Mars were avowedly intended and understood as a popular recognition of the respect paid to the Republic by the fact of their presence. Indeed, the one feature of the whole inaugural ceremony which, perhaps, most impressed any unbiassed spectator was the popular character attaching to the whole affair. The military element was, to employ a well-known metaphor, "conspicuous for its absence." Without doubt there was, as always, a large number of troops within the barracks of Paris; but neither inside nor outside the Exhibition building was there any display of soldiery. Order was preserved within the Palace by the *sergents de ville*, who displayed an amount of good temper and forbearance which could not have been surpassed by our London police; and, though the effect of the procession headed by the Marshal was somewhat marred by the pressure of a crowd of spectators who burst through the lines, there was nothing approaching disturbance or even disorder. There were few uniforms visible and no military bands; the whole spectacle had a civilian aspect, familiar enough to Englishmen but which is a novelty in Continental pageants. In Paris, as on similar occasions in London, the one thing which redeemed the opening of the Exhibition from monotony was the presence of a vast concourse of spectators.

The most noteworthy part, however, of Wednesday's show was to be found in the aspect of Paris itself. In spite of the rain the whole town, down to the most remote suburbs and the most out of the way corners, was covered with flags; and in the evening, when the weather cleared, the illumination was universal except in the aristocratic quarters. The whole population of the town seemed to have flocked down to the Boulevards, and the crowd was so dense that the policemen on duty would have been powerless to repress any disturbance that might have taken place. But, though the Boulevards were traversed from time to time by groups waving flags and torches, singing the Marseillaise, and shouting "Vive la République," there was not the slightest occasion for any interference on the part of the custodians of the public peace. The mob was eminently good-humoured and orderly, and it was impossible not to recognise the fact that the opening of the Exhibition was regarded by the masses at large as a sort of triumph of the popular cause which would have been marred by any breach of order. We are not disposed to attach any undue value to this kind of popular demonstration. The crowd which gave cheers for the Republic was substantially identical with that which, not eight years ago, shouted "*à Berlin*" in the self-same thoroughfares. Still, though the importance of such manifestations of public sentiment may easily be over-estimated, they are always worth taking into account, and there is no gainsaying the plain fact that the population of Paris took occasion of the opening of the Exhibition to manifest their adhesion to the cause of the Republic. In the judgment of the French populace the gala of Wednesday last was regarded as a pledge of the maintenance of peace and the revival of industrial prosperity. The experience of the late war has not, as yet, lost its influence, and the same nation which in 1870 greeted the struggle with Germany with popular exultation has learnt, for the time at any rate, to look on the preservation of peace as the greatest boon which can be bestowed upon the community. The conditions under which England would have to embark upon a contest with Russia are happily very different from those under which France pitted her strength against Germany. Nor, in as far as human foresight can reach, have we as a nation any cause, even on the most unfavourable hypothesis, to anticipate such calamities as those which the war of 1870 entailed on France. Still, to those who knew Paris during the latter days of the Empire, the spectacle presented by the city this week cannot fail to suggest an uneasy feeling as to what some few years hence may be the impression left on the popular mind of a war undertaken with the most confident of hopes and the "lightest" of hearts.

A DANISH CRITIC ON THE CATTLE BILL.

While the Lords are sitting upon the Cattle Bill, the non-agricultural classes interested in the subject are busily adding to the material upon which the House of Commons will have to pronounce judgment. The farmers, as represented by the Duke of Richmond, have nothing to add to a proposal which has the recommendation of extreme simplicity. On the one hand, the slaughter at the ports of the total foreign importation is a mode of prevention the thoroughness of which no one will deny; on the other, the slaughter of a healthy cargo from Portugal simply because we have received infected shipments from Hamburgh suggests many objections which the civic as well as the agricultural mind would find it difficult to answer. Consignments from the Tagus to the Thames do not proceed to their destinations *viâ* the Alps and the Elbe. The farmers' silence is intelligible. Buyers, however, and consumers are steadily denouncing a measure which, as against "clean countries" like Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Canada, and North America, amount to prohibition. A little while back, the representatives of twenty-seven leading towns waited upon the Lord President with a respectful petition for a modification of the Bill. At an important meeeting held a few days since in Southampton it was stated that arrivals of diseased cattle from Oporto were almost if not altogether unknown. Protests are expected from Canada and the States, where, as the Duke of Richmond ought to know, the disease has not even been heard of. Denmark appears to be the only Continental country which has, as yet, raised its voice against his Grace's Bill; and the views of the Danish breeders and shippers are vigorously and clearly put forth in two letters just published in *The Times* from a correspondent in Copenhagen. The writer asserts that no instance of rinderpest has occurred in Denmark since 1781; that the two slight visitations of pleuro-pneumonia that have been recorded in the interval have been distinctly traced to a French cargo *viâ* England, and an English herd that had passed through Sweden; and that the recent average of foot-and-mouth cases was only one in 16,000. He even offers to bring home to our own doors the late outbreak for which in his evidence before the Commissioner, the eminent cattle-breeder, Mr. Booth, has made the Danes responsible. To the supporters of the bill the Danish critic's estimate of the situation may perhaps suggest the bias of the patriot rather than the impartiality of an economist; and we are not in a position to test its literal accuracy. But this we know, that it is corroborated by the fact that, of the 11,000 cases of foreign infection during 1876, not one was recorded against Denmark.

The writer next proceeds to show that the proposed law will prove fatal to the Danish trade, which amounts to fifty thousand head per annum, and lead to an enhancement in prices. The bill proceeds on the assumption that the stoppage in the live stock traffic will be counterbalanced by an increase in that of dead meat—that the effects of the prohibition against the transmission of foreign cattle to our inland markets will be neutralised by the facilities for slaughter at the ports of debarcation. But the argument of the Danish critic is that his countrymen will decline the risks of trade under the new conditions, which, as we have formerly had occasion to show, must often mean forced sales. Cattle after landing

require some time to recover from the deteriorating effects of a sea voyage upon their weight and quality. Buyers also frequently find it necessary to hold over for more prosperous times the foreign herds which they may have imported during a dull market. But under the new law they must either give up business or accept the hazards of compulsory slaughter. This, our critic contends, must tell with particular severity against the Anglo-Danish trade, the bulk of which is carried on during the warmest months of the year, and when the necessary arrangements for the preservation of dead meat during the inland journey must cost more time and money than traders can well afford. It is true that the art of preservation has been carried to a really high degree of perfection, as may be seen from the increase in the trade, not of cattle killed at the ports, but of imported dead meat, the quantity of which, according to the Duke of Richmond's statement, has multiplied itself eighteen-fold since 1875. On the other hand, there is the fact of a continued and rapid advance in the American live-stock trade, which demands and is being supplied with a specially-designed class of vessels. Some authorities even anticipate a more or less partial supersession of the American dead-meat trade by its rival. But the truth is that all the arguments which the Duke of Richmond bases on the compensatory effects of new trade developments are wholly beside the point, unless he can show that the prohibitions against live imports from this or that country are necessary for the protection of our home stock. Granting that our precautions cannot be too stringent in the case of plague-haunted countries like Germany and Belgium, is it any answer to Denmark or America that she may send us her cattle in the form of meat? It is much as if A. were to threaten B. with a black eye, and then, by way of apology and encouragement, suggest the use of an efficacious ointment. The stuff might perhaps save, to some extent, B.'s usually respectable appearance, but would that be any consolation for an unprovoked assault? Cattle may, no doubt, be slaughtered at the seaports as well as anywhere else, and the problem of refrigerating apparatus for railway passage has been skilfully solved in the case of the Aberdeenshire trade, but, as against a country like Denmark, the new provisions will amount to protection, whether we call it by that name or not. At the very least, and unless it can be proved, first, that they are an effectual remedy against cattle plague, and, secondly, that the remedy itself is a less evil than the disease, they are but a capricious interference with the course of trade and the various interests and adjustments that have grown up in accordance with it.

The modification suggested by the Danish writer amounts in substance to one that has already been made in these columns. Instead of scheduling all countries whatever, let us deal with each according to its deserts. Let the present rules in regard to Russia, Germany, and Belgium be maintained; but let the trade (subject to due inspection) with Denmark, the Peninsula, Canada, and North America be free until we know that they send us the Cattle Plague. In a word, invest the Privy Council with discretionary powers, instead of passing an undiscriminating measure, whose questionable merit is that it saves trouble. The State has its agents in every country whence we import our stock and meat supplies. Why not invite them to apprise their Government, by telegram, of every outbreak as soon as it occurs? Why not even invite foreign governments to co-operate with us in the work of prevention? They would do so for their own good, if, as we are told, the Duke's bill is sure to be disliked by the Continental exporters. Denmark, indeed, has set the example in a most effective and spirited manner, and she offers to extend her already admirable system of inspection in any way his Grace may suggest. No animal, or vessel, is allowed to leave a Danish port without minute examination by a skilled veterinary surgeon. Nor is the official vigilance relaxed even after the cargo has reached the high seas, for the writer cites a recent case in which the authorities, having discovered that the cattle had been housed in an infected shed previous to shipment, telegraphed the fact to England, so that the animals arrived in good time to be killed on the spot. This is honesty, and we sincerely trust that it meets with at least its due reward. Where, we ask, is the fairness of scheduling a country that deals with us in this straightforward and honourable manner?—a country, moreover, which may justly claim the right to teach her customer a lesson or two in the art of prevention.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION.

A Kentish farmer complained to us the other day that his farm was infested by bird catchers. They came when and where they liked; if he ordered them off they derided him; if he asked for their names and addresses they told him to whistle for them. He threatened to give them in charge, and they laughingly told him that the police would not take the charge. He threatened to track them home and summon them, but they remarked that even if he did succeed in "running them to earth," it would not hurt them, as their employers, the bird fanciers and dealers, always paid their fines for them. They had some half a dozen nightingales in their possession one day, and never were empty handed. Goldfinches and other songsters they constantly had in their toils. They spread their clap-nets in his pastures, and dared him to touch them when he threatened to impound them. This is no exaggerated picture of the open defiance of the law which daily takes place in the face of the various "Wild Birds Protection Acts" recently passed. With the Sea Fowl Protection Act, passed in 1869, farmers have but little to do. Some agitation is going on at this moment to obtain its repeal, so far as it protects gannets, &c.; on the ground that these birds prey voraciously upon herrings, and that the herring fisheries of Scotland are prejudiced thereby. The inhabitants, however, of Ailsa, which is a stronghold of the gannet, object to the repeal, as the bird is with them a valuable article of commerce in that place.

But it is rather with the later Acts of 1872 and 1876, which relate to the protection of certain song-birds and of wild-fowl which do not come under the game laws, that—for reasons agricultural and also connected with natural history—we are most interested. The Wild Birds Act of 1872 was originally designed to protect certain of the larger and scarcer birds of Great Britain from wanton injury during their breeding season. Such were the dotterel, avocet, wild duck, plover, snipe, sandpiper, stonehatch, woodcock, and divers other birds, more or less scarce, and at the same time of marketable value. No true sportsman or lover of natural history would destroy these during the breeding season, but selfish and short-sighted individuals are always to be found who will greedily kill the goose with the golden eggs, regardless of the future interests not only of themselves, but also of their neighbours. Against marauders such as these the Act was designed; but when it went into committee, a naturalist clique, who were animated by a laudable desire to protect British song and ornamental birds as well as those which form articles of food, endeavoured to bring this second class of birds within the scope of the Act. The wisest course would have been to have brought in a second and separate bill, with distinct provisions; for the fence time, and the penalties for infringing the same, which suit one sort of bird, do not always suit the others. However, the bill was altered and made to do double duty, and as a result, was a practical failure. The penalties were so mild as to be inoperative. For a first offence the offender was to be only reprimanded and made to pay the cost of the summons. For a second he was to be fined not more than five shillings for each bird in his possession which contravened the Act, and such fine was to include the cost of summons. Lastly, if he refused to give his name and address when demanded, he was to be fined, if afterwards detected, ten shillings, over and above any other fine to which he might be liable under the Act. The birds in the schedule of the Act are, for the most part, of greater market value than five shillings, so that it well paid a marauder to defy the Act, even if he was detected and summoned every time. Still more, when the odds were so greatly against detection, did violation of the law pay him. Again, even if he was detected, it was worth while to refuse his name and address at a risk, for he could

only incur a further fine of ten shillings, which was out of all proportion to the immunity which he would gain if his contumacy resulted in his preserving his incognito. If he was, after all, eventually brought to justice, his employers, the dealers, gladly paid his fine, and bade him go sin again—cheaply at the price. To remedy, to some extent, this state of affairs, the original Bill of 1872, as designed prior to its tinkering in committee, was revised in 1876, and passed. The penalties under it were more stringent than under the earlier Act. No grace for first offence; the penalty raised to £1 for each bird, exclusive of costs of conviction; and the fine for refusing to give name and address increased to £2. The new Act left, however, untouched the penalties under the old Act, as respects the song and other smaller birds not specified in the new schedule. It is with reference to these practically unprotected birds that the grievance arises to which our Kentish friend alluded so plaintively the other day.

As a question of agricultural interest, the preservation of small birds indirectly affects the price of food for the million. Farmers have, for some time past, realised the folly of "sparrow clubs;" although birds will, unless scared away, devour ripe and newly-sown grain, they prey during the rest of the year upon parasites which otherwise would prevent the grain from ever arriving at maturity. The trouble and expense of scaring them for a few days at seed time and harvest are well repaid by the protection which they afford against insects and caterpillars during the other weeks of the year. The French vine growers trace, not without reason, the devastations of the *phylloxera vastatrix* to the custom of destroying small birds in France. In Colorado small birds are but rare, and much of the sudden spread of the "potato beetle" is ascribed to this fact. If only for selfish motives, the British public have, therefore, an interest in ensuring due protection during the breeding season to their feathered allies. Further, as a matter of natural history, we may view with regret the now comparative rarity of several species of birds, which, had they been protected during past years by a "fence" period, would not now be in danger of becoming extinct. "The wheeling kite's wild solitary cry" is now but seldom heard even in the wilds of Great Britain; the knot, ruff, and other fen birds, are driven away by the march of cultivation. The kite certainly does not come within either schedule which the law now seeks to protect; as a bird of prey he is destroyed in the interests of game whenever opportunity offers; but none the less should we be sorry to see him become extinct in the category of British birds, and we are inclined to think that too wholesale destruction of even birds of prey militates in the long run against the the end which it seeks to attain. Nature strikes her own balance, and the grouse disease is by many naturalists traced to the over destruction of those birds of prey which would otherwise kill down weakly and unhealthy game, and prevent it from reproducing its defects in the succeeding stock. But, even if we cannot include rare birds of prey in the schedules of these Acts, that is no reason why such species as they profess to protect should be left to the mercy of marauders, simply for want of efficient penalties. These Acts are not like game laws; they do not seek to monopolise the *ferœ naturæ* of the soil for the benefit of a class, but only to prevent selfish and short-sighted persons from killing and capturing *out of season* that which is really public property and a public benefit. The same principles dictated the fishery clauses of the Thames Acts. The Thames is open fishing ground for the public, and for that very reason it is undesirable that its produce should be destroyed in the spawning season, and that undersized and immature fish should be netted at any time. Further, it is contrary to everyone's received notions of the rights of private property, that bird catchers should be able with impunity to invade the fields of tenant farmers, and even private gardens, in the pursuit of an unlawful calling.

The two Acts above specified are good in principle. As already shown, it is in the details of their penalties that they fall short of what is desirable. We would suggest the following amendments to them at an early period of legislation. Firstly, the fines should be largely increased in amount. especially in the case of song birds, for which a five shilling fine is no protection at all. Nightingales and other warblers fetch upwards of ten shillings apiece in the market, and at that price it is actually profitable to defy the law. Secondly, for a second offence, there should be an alternative to the Bench of imprisonment without option of a fine; this will do away with the present system of bird dealers paying for their *employés* the fines which they incur. Thirdly, inasmuch as the police do not patrol the woods and wilds, and the public are the only persons who come across these violators of the law, half the penalty incurred should be given to the informer; this would make the public the guardians of the Acts; as it is at present, few private individuals are so engrossed in the cause of Natural History as to care to face for nothing the risk of insult and the annoyance of attendance at a police court. Fourthly, the occupier of land upon which birdcatchers are found should be empowered at once to seize the engines of capture and destruction, and the captured birds also, just as in the case of unlawful fishing and of poaching for game. Fifthly, the mere *trespass in pursuit* of wild birds during the breeding season should be made a punishable offence. It is often difficult to prove the actual capture of birds named in the schedules of the Acts. Most of the public are ignorant of the species protected, and even if they carried the Acts in their pockets would fail to identify this or that bird by its plumage. Besides, it is inconsistent that no punishment should be incurred, when the intent is patent, until after mischief has been actually done. When a farmer finds a couple of roughs with clap-nets ready spread on his lands he does not need to search their pockets to divine their intentions; and, unfortunately, he has no such right of search. If those legislators who busied themselves in framing the Acts in question will now bestir themselves to amend them in the details thus suggested, the law will then cease to be what at present it unfortunately is, a dead letter as regards efficiency.

CONSTANCE KENT.

Dr. Bucknill, who is, we believe, a physician of considerable eminence in the special department of mental disease, has thought fit to rake up the painful story of the Road murder. Now nearly twenty years ago, there was living at Road, a little village in Wiltshire, a gentleman of the name of Kent, an inspector of factories. Mr. Kent had been twice married. By his first wife he had three daughters and a son. Soon after her death he married his governess, and by her he had two daughters and a second son, Francis Savile Kent, who at the time of his death was a mere child, some three years old. One morning little Francis Kent was missing. Search was made for him, and his body was found in an outhouse in the garden. He had been taken from his bed in his night shirt, carried out of the house, and murdered in the most brutal manner, his head being nearly severed from his body. No knife, razor, or other weapon could be found, and all that was clear was that the murder must have been committed by some one whom the child knew and liked, as otherwise he would have alarmed the house when he was taken from his bed. A crime so mysterious naturally created the most intense excitement; and popular opinion, which in cases of this kind is almost invariably wrong, fixed the murder upon two persons, Mr. Kent and the child's nursemaid. It was assumed, without a shadow of evidence, that a guilty intrigue had been going on between the two, that the child had heard or seen something compromising, and that it had been murdered to prevent its divulging the disgraceful secret. The nursemaid was actually arrested and brought before the magistrates, but there was nothing against her beyond idle suspicion, and the charge was dismissed. After this an astute detective of the name of Whicher was sent down by the Home Office to investigate the matter. He almost immediately detected the guilty person. Among the children of the first marriage was a girl named Constance, who at that time was between sixteen and seventeen years old. One of her night shirts was missing, and no one could tell what had become of it. Whicher, with a really marvellous skill, examined the house. took the relative position of the rooms,

gathered evidence sufficient to convince any reasonable man that Constance had destroyed her night shirt herself, and so arrived at the conclusion that she had got up in the night, taken her little brother out of his bed, carried him into the garden, murdered him, and quietly herself come back and gone to bed again. He arrested her and took her before the magistrates. There was the evidence, such as it was. No sensible man could entertain but one opinion about it. It left no room for moral doubt, but it was not enough to hang a human being upon. The magistrates took this view of the case. They dismissed the charge. The penny papers at once made this wicked girl into a heroine, and gushed about her in their own disgusting manner. For weeks leader after leader extolled her beauty, her youth, her innocence, her fortitude, and all her other virtues. Her relatives knew a little more about her than did the gentlemen who wrote these panegyrics. They did not want another murder in the family, and they sent her to live with some Sisters of Mercy.

Five years afterwards, in 1865, the wretched girl made a full confession. She had been brought under the "direction" of a certain fussy, but well-meaning priest, to whom she owned that she had killed her brother, that no one but herself had had any part in the murder, and that she loved the child but killed him for reasons of her own. Her confessor very properly told her it was her duty to go before a magistrate, and he took her himself before Sir Thomas Henry. She persisted in her confession, and was committed for trial. At her trial she pleaded guilty and persisted in her plea. Sentence of death was passed, but it was almost immediately commuted to penal servitude for life, although no grounds for the commutation were ever made public. We believe the *Daily Telegraph* is correct in stating that, if Constance Kent ever actually underwent a period of penal servitude, it was a very brief one. Dr. Bucknill had examined the girl before the trial, and had expressed his opinion that the plea of insanity, the only plea possible for her, could not be set up. He added, however, that, in his judgment, she would become insane under imprisonment. The Kent family are believed to have had considerable influence in high places, an influence for which various reasons have been suggested. Mr. Bucknill, son of the physician, assures us that "to the best of his belief" Constance Kent is now undergoing her sentence. The best of Mr. Bucknill's belief does not, after all, come to very much. Anyhow, whether Constance Kent be in penal servitude or at large, one thing is certain, that, but for some sort of influence or another, she would undoubtedly have been hanged as she deserved.

Dr. Bucknill is now delivering the Lumleian lectures on insanity, and, according to his own statement, feels it his duty to make the real secret of the Road murder generally known. People wondered at the time of her trial whether Constance Kent was really sane or not. It was known, of course, that the medical men—Dr. Bucknill amongst them—reported her sane; but it was urged, on the other hand, that no motive was alleged or even suggested for the crime, and that to commit a crime so terrible without motive was in itself evidence of insanity. It is, no doubt, as Dr. Bucknill profoundly observes, "a strange portent in our social life that a young girl not insane should be capable of murdering her beautiful boy-brother in cold blood without motive." Dr. Bucknill thinks that "the right time and opportunity" have come for him "to explain away this apparent monstrosity of conduct;" and he is in a position to tell us us that "a real and dreadful motive did exist." We will not give the story in his own flowery language, for it is capable of being told in a very few words. Constance Kent had hated her stepmother while she was only her governess. When she became her stepmother she hated her worse. At first she had resolved to poison her. Ultimately, however, she determined to render her miserable for the rest of her life by killing her little boy. This, we now know, is what the girl herself told Dr. Bucknill. Dr. Bucknill told it to Mr. Coleridge, now Lord Coleridge, who was her counsel; and it was very properly agreed between them that under the circumstances the plea of insanity could not be sustained. The extraordinary part of the story, however, is that Dr. Bucknill and Lord Coleridge are somehow at variance; for the latter stated in open Court, after the plea of guilty had been entered, that his client expressly desired him to say that she had not been driven to the terrible act, as had been asserted, by any unkind treatment of her mother-in-law, and that she had met with nothing at home but tender and forbearing love. "I hope I may add, my lord," Mr. Coleridge continued, not improperly, "that it gives me a melancholy pleasure to be made the organ of these statements, because, *on my honour, I believe them to be true.*" Now, here is, to say the least of it, a very curious difference between Dr. Bucknill and Lord Coleridge. According to Dr. Bucknill, if there is any meaning in words, Lord Coleridge knew before he went into court that the girl had murdered her brother out of hatred to her stepmother. Lord Coleridge's own statement in Court is absolutely incompatible with this, and the matter is one which certainly needs to be cleared up.

Apart, however, from the discrepancy between his own statements and those made by Lord Coleridge at the trial, we consider it a grave indiscretion on Dr. Bucknill's part to make the statement he has made, and we fail to see anything whatever that justifies him in making it. He examined the miserable girl in his capacity as a medical man. Whatever she said to him was said to him in his professional capacity, and ought, in our judgment, to be kept an inviolable secret. It certainly ought not to be used as a *purpureus pannus* to adorn a Lumleian lecture. We all know that Dr. Bucknill is a very learned physician and an expert in lunacy. But we had forgotten, and were glad to have forgotten all about the Road murder; and in our opinion it adds nothing to Dr. Bucknill's deservedly high reputation that Constance Kent should have told him what she no doubt also told Mr. Wagner and many other people. Dr. Bucknill thinks "that it is mischievous that so great and notorious a crime should remain unexplained," and he "believes the explanation he offers can give no pain to those concerned in it." We disagree with him on each point. Great and notorious crimes often remain unexplained. Every year has its undiscovered murders; and what mischief has been obviated by making public this sickening story of domestic unhappiness we cannot for the soul of us see. As for the sad revelation "giving no pain" to those concerned, we venture to think that those members of the late Mr. Kent's family who are still alive are probably better judges of the matter than is Dr. Bucknill.

At the same time, now that Dr. Bucknill has dragged the pitiful tale into light again, we may perhaps be allowed to point out that the Road murder has two morals. In the first place, it shows us how very little the opinion of an expert in lunacy really comes to. Dr. Bucknill examined Constance Kent. She gave him a detailed, methodical account of the murder, telling him how she had done it, why she had done it, and how she contrived to evade detection. The story was coherent, probable, and agreed with the facts. The girl was sane on all other points; and accordingly Dr. Bucknill came to the conclusion that she was sane with regard to the murder. We are very much mistaken if it needed an expert in lunacy to arrive at this result. Any intelligent layman could have come to the same conclusion. The other aspect of the case is the sad light it lets on human nature. There is no doubt whatever that Constance Kent was one of those unhappy persons who suffer from what has been called "moral insanity"—a disease which wrecks the moral perception while it leaves the intellect almost intact. Whether her stepmother had treated her badly or not, need not be considered. No amount of ill-treatment on the part of A. can justify B., if sane, in killing C. The Road murder, indeed, was as wicked and cruel a crime as any that has occurred in the present century, and the circumstances of it were aggravated. The girl murdered her own little brother, a child whose innocence and babyhood ought to have protected him. She knew that it was everywhere generally believed that it was her own father who had committed the crime; and she yet held silence for years. Like all women of violent passions, she seems to have been susceptible of strong emotions, and when she confesses at last it is not really from any conscientious sense of duty, but in a sort of hysterical religious enthusiasm. Had she been the child of an agricultural labourer or a mechanic she

would undoubtedly have been left to the gallows. Notoriously, it was private influence saved her. Perhaps it is as well for us to realise that natures of this kind exist.

THE MYSTERY OF MASONRY.

Within the last few days the subject of Freemasonry has been brought once more before public notice. Of itself, in as far as the outer world are aware, the Order of Free and Accepted Masons remains very much what it always was and has been. Some little time ago the Grand Orient of France expunged from its ritual certain statements avowing a belief in the existence of an *Etre Suprême*. Thereupon the Grand Lodge of England, under the presidency of the late Secretary for the Colonies, passed a resolution declaring that no Mason who did not recognise the Divine origin of the world could be affiliated to a British confraternity. But, to the best of our belief, the order of the Universe has not been sensibly affected either by the scepticism of the Grand Orient or the orthodoxy of the Grand Lodge. The seasons succeed each other, the tides ebb and flow, and the earth, strange to say, revolves upon its axis, utterly irrespective of the views entertained by the Masonic Craft as to the authorship of our planet. Nor have we any reason to think that the number of believers in an unseen world has been diminished by the *pronunciamento* of the French Masons or increased by the counter protest of their English brethren. Whether Freemasons as a body believe or disbelieve in the truths of revealed or natural religion may be a matter of supreme importance to their own vital interests, but has as little import for the world at large as whether the Fishmongers' Company are supralapsarians or the Goldsmiths hold the doctrine of preventive grace. What has brought our English Masons once more into public favour has not been theological controversy but Royal patronage, not the beauty of holiness but the charm of Royalty. The plain truth is that, as the Prince of Wales happened to confer additional *éclat* on his re-election as Grand Master of England by the presence of the Crown Prince of Denmark at the inaugural ceremony, our daily newspapers felt it their duty to laud the glories of Freemasonry and to recite once more the stock common-places about the antiquity, mystery, potency, and beneficence of the Masonic craft. Now, we have no objection whatever to Masons either collectively or individually. We know nothing of the order beyond what is known to the general public; and our experience, as that of all men who have mixed at all in the world, has led us to believe that the Freemasons are an eminently respectable body of men, of genial and kindly dispositions, whose one weakness is a certain tendency to prose—an undefined affinity to boredom. If a number of middle-aged gentlemen like to meet together at stated periods, to deck themselves out in aprons and stars and crosses, to recite long strings of words, to make a variety of gestures, to address each other as Grand Panjandrums and Venerable Antiquities, or whatever the proper appellations may be, to make believe that they are engaged in some mystic confederacy, and then to sup heavily on indigestible viands washed down with unwholesome liquors, nobody has any right to complain. As the Frenchman said when he saw a husband kiss his wife, *c'est bizarre, mais ce n'est pas défendu.*

All we object to is the pretence of regarding the High Jinks of Masonry as matters of serious moment. In the name of outraged common sense we feel bound to protest when we find the leading journal publishing an article, as it did last week, in which the question is gravely discussed as to whether Freemasonry owed its origin to the building of the Temple, and whether the craft may not have preserved traditions, secrets, and symbols handed down in an unbroken masonical succession from lodge to lodge through the lapse of ages. Really, at the present day, when our faith has been so rudely tried, it is somewhat too hard that we should be expected to swallow the legend of Freemasonry. Undoubtedly, there were masons engaged in the building of the Temple; and it is impossible to prove that these masons may not have been formed into a guild or trades' union whose members were initiated into certain trade secrets. And if there were such initiations it is more than likely they were attended with some sort of ceremonial. Cakes and ale were doubtless as much relished in the days of King Solomon as in those of Queen Victoria. But to jump from these data to the conclusion that the Undergraduates who form the Apollo Lodge at Oxford are the direct inheritors of secrets, ritual, and pass-words established by the bricklayers of Zion, is to ask too much of human credulity. It has been shown, as clearly as any negative truth can be established by historical research, that no Masonic lodge was ever heard of till the last century, and that the lodge alleged to have been founded in England under King Edwin in the tenth century is as apochryphal as the reign of King Malachi in the Erin isle. The history of Freemasonry is almost as well known as that of the Oddfellows or the Foresters, or the Antediluvian Buffaloes, or the Good Templars. For aught we know to the contrary, Sir Wilfrid Lawson may, in the annals of Good Templarship, be alleged to be the direct inheritor of the dignities possessed by Jacques de Molai; but even this pretension would be credible, compared with that to which the Masons would have us give our assent.

Still, after all, the claim of the Freemasons to trace their descent to remote antiquity is less difficult to swallow than the pretension that they are in the possession of secrets never disclosed through an endless series of generations, and maintained unrevealed by mysterious and awful penalties awaiting their disclosure. The Masonic secret—if such there is—must be known on their own showing to many hundred thousands of members, who are not all of them, to say the least, distinguished either by reticence or discretion. In this country the price of learning the dark secrets which the all-wise Solomon confided to his faithful craftsmen rises, if we are correctly informed, from five to five-and-twenty pounds, according to the social gentility of each particular lodge. The concentrated essence of Solomonic sapience may be procured for the smallest note issued by the Bank of England; and yet we are asked to believe that there really is something known to Freemasons which is not known to the uninitiated universe. Once upon a time a showman made a fortune at a fair by exhibiting within a closed tent a horse whose head was declared to be placed where the tail ought to have been. The visitors on entering the booth found a horse fastened with his tail towards the the manger of his stall. Each instalment of visitors was followed by a fresh batch, for the showman, with a keen knowledge of human nature, had calculated that any visitor who had once been inside would recommend his friends outside to follow his example. So runs the parable; its application our readers may draw for themselves. The *Daily Telegraph*, following the suit of *The Times*, has taken occasion of the Royal visit to Grand Lodge to sing the praises of Masonry as an organization by means of which our Indian fellow subjects may be united to us in bonds of harmony and love. Now, as a matter of fact, Freemasonry has flourished in every European country throughout upwards of a century; and yet, if its mission is to bring peace on earth and goodwill to man, all we can say is that its mission has been a signal failure. The craft was more powerful in the United States than probably in any other civilised community; and yet the ties of Masonic brotherhood did nothing to prevent or even to mitigate the bloodshed of the war of Secession. Not being initiated in the secrets of the craft, we cannot say what its internal regulations may be; but, in so far as outside rumours can be relied upon, we doubt extremely whether it has, or desires to have, any claim to be considered as forming an international brotherhood. In Algiers Arab Masons are, we believe, never admitted to the French lodges. Coloured brethren are not, we think, to be found in the Masonic conclaves of the United States; and we should be surprised to learn that the exalted offices of the craft in Indian lodges had been filled by natives. The plain, simple truth is that Freemasonry is neither more nor less than a somewhat elaborate system of convivial entertainment, flavoured with a genuine element of benevolence and good feeling. We have not a word to say against the craft. All we—in common, as we imagine, with the great

majority of the members—see cause to complain of is the attempt to surround an organisation for the promotion of good fellowship with the attributes of a mysterious confederacy.

EASTER PENANCE.

The beauty of spring-tide, though a theme for poets, appeals only to the eye. To the inner man March and April, and even May, are the least enjoyable months of the year. They are not cold enough to make the fireside thoroughly luxurious, and are too chilly to allow an out-door life to be appreciated. There is no consistency of temperature; one day the wind may be south-west and an overcoat unbearable; the next it may be north-east and an Ulster be welcome. The weather does not know its own mind for twenty-four hours. If we travel, we feel it necessary to pack both summer and winter raiment. There is no greater delusion than to suppose that there is such a normal thing as a distinct spring temperature. Milliners will endeavour to impress the necessity of spring fashions upon customers, but there is really no such creation as a spring climate as a half-way step between winter cold and summer heat: spring weather consists in a sort of sandwich of chill and sultriness combined, without order or warning, and often shifting from one to the other within the round of twenty-four hours. To a naturalist there may be a certain amount of beauty in the bloom of forest flowers and in song birds toying on the wing; but the British public prefer as a rule animal comfort to scenes of the picturesque, and do not care to shiver and swelter alternately for the sake of mere scenery. Yet fashion exercises influence which Nature would fail to supply, and every Easter the well-to-do classes feel themselves bound to commence an exodus from London just at the time when there is least of all to entice them into the provinces.

We can understand a jaded politician being glad of change of scene from St. Stephen's, and of the excuse for whipping waters with a green drake, though not a trout may be on the rise; we could also understand a rush for Punchestown before Passion week; and when, later on, the Mayfly is in full frolic, it is intelligible that ardent piscators should prefer brooks to politics at the latter end of May. But the Easter exodus is not dictated by any such temptations of sport. Hunting is at an end, there is nothing except a possibility of fly-fishing to occupy any sportsman; the ladies find it too cold for picnics, and even if lawn tennis can be commenced by the juniors, that is no more than they can enjoy at "Prince's" without the necessity of leaving town for the game. Yet, no sooner has Parliament been prorogued than the fashionable announcements teem with news that Lord and Lady A., or Mr. and Mrs. B. and family have left London for their country seat, or for this or that seaside hotel. When they get there, the real penance begins. If at their own house, the reaction of social dulness is keenly felt by the ladies, unless they have been careful to fill the house with guests for the week. But this latter resource for amusement is not so commonly adopted; the change of domicile is for so short a period that, if the distance to the country-house is considerable, it is hardly worth while to bring down the whole staff of the servants' hall, still less the coachman and horses. Without these it is out of the question to think of receiving a houseful of guests. So the young ladies mope, affect to interest themselves in finding primroses, and in lounging into the parish church on Easter eve to assist the parson's daughters with the decorations. They have nothing to ride, for their saddle-horses had been left in London; the hunt, and county balls are all at an end for the season, and there is not even a meet of hounds to look on at and to kill a weary morning. The skies are alternately smiles and tears, and the pleasures of lawn tennis are thereby marred. A double batch of novels from Mudie's is about the only resource till the fortnight of penance shall come to an end. As for paterfamilias, if he can frame an excuse for tarrying in town *en garçon*, he will clutch at it; with his club and cronies thereat he will be happy enough. But if his better half has the upper hand, and insists on his accompanying the family, he has a weary time of it unless he is a votary of Izaak Walton. He receives his daily paper at breakfast-time, and when after dinner he calculates upon a study of it while his wife and daughters retire to the drawing room, he perhaps finds that the young ladies and mamma have, on its arrival by second delivery, cut it up between them to read during five o'clock tea, and the main sheet is somehow mislaid. Throughout the day he has nothing to do, unless it be to receive a personal appeal from a tenant who begs for grace in the matter of his rent on account of the bad times. If he has been jaded by late hours at Parliamentary duties he will not feel the burden of solitude so much; he may even relish the sensation of utter idleness, like Leech's holiday seeker, who could lie on the beach and throw stones into the water all day with real enjoyment. But it must be remembered that of those who take part in the Easter exodus but a small proportion are saddled with Parliamentary labours; or, if they are among the noble army of legislators, allow their duties to become too heavy a burden to themselves. The majority leave London because it is the correct thing to do, and not because they have any distinct pleasure in prospect when they lock their portmanteaus.

Most of us have smiled over Thackeray's sketches of the families who seek to combine the exigencies of caste with the necessities of purse, and who, to conform with the fashion of their neighbours, close their front shutters during August and September, but migrate no farther than to their back rooms. Yet even these hypothetical miserables are hardly greater slaves to fashion than a large section of those who feel themselves compelled to quit their London houses in the depth of spring inclemency, just when they have begun to settle themselves comfortably. It is because the period of migration is so short that many do not feel it worth while to move down their entire establishment from town to country, and yet grudge the discomfort of a country house without a full staff of servants and of the stable, that many emigrants prefer a watering-place hotel as the place for Easter penance. On the whole, it is cheaper, and there will be more to amuse in a place of public resort, such as Brighton or Folkestone, than in the depths of the country. Job-masters are plentiful in such places, and a carriage can be jobbed for the week or two at less cost and inconvenience than the removal of the entire stable from town to livery would entail. Yet even here dullness is painful as compared to the resources of London which have been so reluctantly sacrificed. Paterfamilias grumbles at his dinners deteriorated, and at the absence of club friends; the young ladies miss their admirers, who used to lounge in for afternoon tea and table talk. If Cowes or Ryde have been selected, the yachts have not yet begun to spread their wings, and there are no friends to offer invitations to lunch afloat or to take an afternoon's cruise in the Solent. The days are anxiously counted to the recommencement of the season, and so soon as the remigration can be with decency attempted, the family thankfully seek the London house once more, where they no longer start at the sounds of their own voices, nor look in vain for a face that they can recognise. The young ladies brighten up when their devotees reappear at luncheon hour and kettledrum; mamma is thankful to see that the fortnight's absence has not cooled the ardour of the admiration of a certain eligible; papa turns over the counterfoils of his cheque-book and groans to calculate how much good money has been wasted in making himself and his belongings uncomfortable, with nothing to show for the sacrifice except a duteous obedience to the demands of that very Fashion of which his better half boasts herself to be one of the leaders, while in reality she is its most abject slave.

INFALLIBILITY.

We all of us count among our relations and friends a number of good people who neither have nor claim any special intellectual or moral superiority over good people in general, who are not conceited, not arrogant, not even, perhaps, especially self-reliant, but who are infallible. No matter who gave them their opinions, or how their tastes came, their own

opinions and tastes are to them the certainties of primary intuition, "the types of things in heaven;" they cannot conceive of them as only individual impressions like their neighbour's, and they cannot conceive of their neighbours' individual impressions as in any way equally important realities to the said neighbours. Their faith is not in themselves, for they will often make no difficulty of admitting incompetence to judge some question they are ruling, and even the temperament of undue self-depreciation is not always found incompatible with infallibility; it is a faith in their faith. The feeling is truly in them, therefore it must be the truth: that is the ratiocination. Under this sort of conviction they can never quite lose the impression that there is something morally wrong in dissimilarity from them. It is not that they want to set themselves up as models, but, since their likes and dislikes, their beliefs, their desires, their ways of doing things, go by the absolute law of being right, there cannot but be some blame to any who depart from that law.

Infallible people do not usually fritter away eloquence in arguments. Why should they, having so simple and final a logic? There are only two sides to any question, the right and the wrong; and their side is the right one. And, on the same good grounds, they rarely accept discussion of their views, even in self-defence from one they may have arraigned; and an attempt to change them is apt to be looked on with a holy and not always patient horror. It does not follow that their views never do change. Though inaccessible to direct reasoning, they are not inaccessible to the modifying influences of intercourse and surroundings, which, with ordinary minds, do far more than any conscious deliberation to shape the course of thought, and they are perhaps rather more than less likely than are people who, for want of faith like theirs, test their own opinions by questioning them, to arrive at other than their earlier phases. The opinion from which nothing can make them swerve is that the other people, those who are not of their mind, are all astray.

There are, of course, always risks of these excellent persons being compelled to make themselves disagreeable in society. There is no telling at what moment it may not be their duty to remonstrate with us. It may be in our theology or in our taste in cookery we have erred, in our conception of the Eastern Question or our sentiments as to blue china, in our respective appreciation of George Eliot's and Miss Broughton's styles of literature or of Miss Brown's and Miss Robinson's styles of dress. For the blame of the heresy is in the differing from them, and the greater or less of the subject matter is of no moment, so regarded. Thus they are called on to break our heads with their precious balms on a miscellaneous variety of occasions of which there is no possible forewarning for us. Echo's part is the safest to play with them, but, though a good deal may be made of it with tact and attentiveness, it cannot always be carried out in society with the requisite completeness; in the exchange of conversation the turns of the talkers inevitably get shifted, and an echo that has to speak first may too easily fail to reproduce what is going to be said to it. No matter how docile we are, sooner or later we do our echoing with a blunder; and then, of course, we have to be reproved. The infallible people do not always lose their tempers very badly with us—sometimes they are sorry for us; and a good many of them, even if they are resentful, know how to avoid downright rudeness, but, under the most favourable circumstances, reproof falls ungenially upon discourse. Being contradicted may be tolerable, and being argued against rather pleasantly stimulating; but being put under the discipline of having to consider oneself reprimanded is a social penance of an altogether aggravating character. And the necessity of inflicting it under which the possessors of infallibility labour makes that quality decidedly less pleasant to the companions of those who possess it than it is to themselves.

But it is about meaningless matters, and in close intimacy, that infallible persons are most depressing to the spirits—in matters, that is, of mere personal tastes and habits. The poorest creature of us all considers himself licensed to be his own authority on these points. Provided he transgresses no law, or custom, or courtesy, and harms neither himself nor anybody else, he may, he takes it, have his own judgment as to what is enjoyable and what is comfortable and what amuses him. He will be guided in the great things of thought and of practical life by duly constituted precedents, as a prudent man should; but in the minor details of existence, those which can affect no one but himself, he will allow himself to possess inclinations of his own. But, unhappily often for domestic peace, it is just in such details that infallible people can least bear dissimilarity from their ideas. If the dissimilarity is in matters of opinion and on large subjects, why, people are not stating their creeds, theological, political, or social, every day, nor acting upon them every day; and so there are intervals of abeyance, and the dissimilarity, not being an incessant fret, may be forgotten for long periods, and so forgotten may even somehow lessen into nothing of its own accord. But, if the dissimilarity is in some small point of mere taste or convenience taking visible form and of frequent repetition, there is a recurring assertion of it, an ostentation of it, as it were, in action, which to a person of the infallible temperament is infinitely aggressive. If, for instance, your wife, taking her idiosyncracy for a final law, has resolved that nobody can wash in unwarmed water with impunity, and you persist in taking unwarmed baths and being the better for them, you are daily outraging her sense of right and vexing her with a slur on the certainty of her knowledge of what everybody ought to do. Consequently, each added bath is an added wrong, and each day begins with what she feels to be on your part a rebellion—not a rebellion against her, for she claims no control, but against the immediate truth of things as proved by the belief in her mind. Or supposing it is you who are infallible, and your wife will not, on the plea that they swell her feet and make her headache and spoil her boots, wear goloshes, although you think wearing goloshes would be just the thing for her health and comfort? Of course every time she went out in damp weather protected by mere double soles, and goloshless, she would be aiming a blow at your peace of mind and convincing you of her fatal unfitness to appreciate your irrefragable sense of things as they ought to be. More married discord comes, in all probability, from the infallibility of one—or, still worse, of both—of the partners than from all the real wrong that goes, or might go, to the divorce courts. "Incompatibility" means that both partners are infallible. It is best explained—though in a case not of man and wife, but of brother and sister, or perhaps of two sisters—in the simple and pregnant lines:—

> Molly, my sister, and I fell out,
> And what do you think it was all about?
> She liked coffee and I liked tea,
> And that was the reason we could not agree.

It is evident that even if Molly and the other person, brother or sister, had only one meal a day at which they drank tea or coffee, as the case might be, the frequency of the occasion for reproof and recrimination between them, each infallible and bent on amending the other's taste and practice, would be as great as to alienate affection in, say, if they were very genuinely attached to begin with, a couple of years. And once a day is a very few times for two infallible people to find each other obstinately wrong in.

The proper, but wholly uninfallible, method for ensuring harmony is equally concisely put in the domestic history of Jack Sprat and his wife. When it was found that he could eat no fat and she no lean, these two kindly and tolerant yoke-fellows arranged each to allow the other's preference free scope, and, as we all know, the happy result was that between them both they licked the platter clean, and so enjoyed at once the blessings of domestic affection and domestic economy. Their secret was a simple one—which yet some of us miss—they could sympathize with tastes they did not share. People talk of sympathy as if it could only be extended to feelings which are our own—that is, in fact, as if we could only sympathize with ourselves; but, if sympathy is worth anything as a lesson to us of what may be in other lives and a tie of kinship with all our kind, it must be able to take us outside ourselves. There can be sympathy in dissimilarity as well as in unity. And such a sympathy is likely to make those who cultivate it as much more useful as more agreeable than infallibility can do.

LITERATURE.

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IRVINGISM.

The History and Doctrines of Irvingism. By Edward Miller, M.A. In Two Volumes. London: Kegan Paul and Co. 1878.

It is rare to meet with a book the main object of which is necessarily polemical, which is written with so much sobriety, moderation, and gentleness as is this book of Mr. Miller's. The writer is an Anglican clergyman, who tells us that his work arose from a desire to prevent clergymen of the Church of England from accepting Irvingite opinions or considering them as compatible with the teaching of their Church. Such an object does not at once lead us to look for strict fairness or great moderation in discussion; but Mr. Miller's tone throughout is sober and dignified, and he aims at discovering and explaining the opinions which he intends to criticise. The first volume is devoted to a history of Irvingism, showing its historical development and tracing the growth of its doctrines and their relation to the ecclesiastical system. The second volume examines the Irvingite opinions, and aims at separating the wheat from the chaff; but this also is done with due tenderness and with large-minded liberality for the weaknesses and foibles of men who are entirely sincere. The only thing that jars upon us, and might read contemptuous to one who merely picked up the book, is Mr. Miller's habit of speaking of the sect he is examining as "these people." He tells us, however, in his preface that he has been sorely put to it to find a name for them. They do not recognise the popular name of "Irvingites," for their system owes little to Irving himself. They prefer to be called "Adherents of a Restored Apostolate;" but this is too long a name for any one's patience to endure.

We do not propose to follow Mr. Miller into the strictly theological part of his work, but the existence of a religious society which has sprung into being within the last half century has an interest for every one. Less is generally known about the Irvingites than about any other religious body. They are looked upon with respect because their body contains men of high rank and position, because they do not obtrude any extravagances upon popular attention, and because they are free from sectarian intolerance. The very mystery which hangs about their proceedings and tenets makes them more impressive, and we are inclined to think that there must be something to be said for a system which can be content so quietly to bide its time. Accounts of them of course exist, but they have all been controversial, and consequently are now forgotten. Mr. Miller has done his best to draw the Irvingite opinions out of their obscurity and to set forth the entire system in which they are now embodied. He is right in his view that mystery is a dangerous thing, and that a body of co-ordinated opinion is not so fascinating to imaginative minds as is the vague knowledge of one or two of the leading tenets of a religious body.

When we follow the history of Irvingism we cannot but be struck with the vitality attaching to religious opinions of any kind or sort. Moreover, the circumstances which gave rise to Irvingism are an instance of the way in which troublous times give rise to new phases of religious development. The beginning of the present century was a time of universal anxiety and difficulty: wars had ravaged Europe, and no one could see what the end would be. Since the early days of Christianity there had never been times when political change was so rife all over the world. At such a time it was natural for many minds that looked upon the present with despair to seek a solution for their difficulties in the prophetic books of Scripture. Prophecy is the favourite resort of imaginative pessimism. It is natural to distrust the future when we do not agree with the principles on which it is founding itself; it is equally natural to infer that nothing but misfortune can be the end of conduct on the part of mankind with which we do not sympathise. The mind of the religiously-disposed Protestant tends, under these circumstances, to betake itself to the visions of the Apocalypse, and to find in what it cannot understand the revelation of antichrist. Such a state of feeling has existed many times in the history of religious thought, and the period that succeeded the fall of Napoleon I. was a time well suited to develop this feeling most strongly. There were bands of earnest students of prophecy who were struggling to apply the words of Scripture to an explanation of their own difficulties, and when an eloquent and fashionable Presbyterian preacher, Edward Irving, set forth their views they gathered eagerly around him. When once there was a deep conviction in their minds that the last days of Christianity had arrived, and that the end of all things was at hand, it was easy for their excited minds to find a confirmation of their belief in miraculous occurrences. Surprising cures were wrought in accordance with words of prophecy, and members of the congregation began to speak in unknown tongues. Instead of looking for an explanation of these things in natural causes, they at once assumed them to be supernatural. The beginning of a new dispensation had come; and a special outpouring of spiritual gifts had taken place to prepare a small body of elect for the Second Advent. Prophecy again began its work which had been suspended during the corrupt ages of the Church, and the chosen few recognised its authentic character. The first disciples of this new doctrine came together from different sides; they brought various prepossessions and beliefs from their early training, and, without wishing to disconnect themselves from other religious bodies, committed themselves to the divine guidance for the future.

In all this there was nothing very remarkable. The first Irvingites might have been regarded as a body of grossly superstitious fanatics. But they contained men of position, wealth and culture, and this tended to give their opinions permanence. Fanatical movements amongst the masses rise and die away; but amongst the rich and reflecting they tend to assume definite forms which bind their adherents to them. A man who lives in the eyes of the world, who has a reputation to lose, and who enforces his beliefs by argument, does not easily part with convictions once formed, and tenaciously impresses them upon the minds of his descendants. Moreover, the Irvingite body contained many men of intelligence, though after Irving's death it numbered no one of genius; amongst these men fanaticism soon gave way to a desire for organisation, and in this they developed many qualities which were attractive. They were in the lucky position of starting the Church from the beginning. They were not reformers engaged in mending a corrupt state of things; but they began afresh, with new gifts of the Spirit, the Church which had lost its original vigour. The prophets designated a new Apostolate under whose direction the Church of the latter days took a fresh start. Moreover, these Apostles were men of liberal culture, who took apostolic journeys that they might see the ritual and examine the beliefs of every country in Christendom. After this survey the organisation of the new Church was taken in hand, and every practice or ceremony that had a reasonable use was incorporated into its Liturgy. Superstitions that had grown round them and had obscured their meaning were swept away by authoritative declarations of their real significance. In this way Irvingism fell in with the tendency of the Catholic revival which was expressed in the Oxford movement, and many who could not endure the opposition which was raised to new discoveries within the Church of England found rest in the Irvingite community. Added to this, the Irvingites possessed great liberality; their system was not in antagonism with any existing system, because it was so immeasurably above it. The Irvingite regards a member of other Churches as imperfect, but not erroneous,—he does not know the full truth, but so far as he goes he is praiseworthy. Hence comes the most aggravating feature of Irvingism to the stiff Anglican—the Irvingites encourage, or at all events do not forbid members of their body to take orders and hold offices in the Church of England.

We do not propose to follow Mr. Miller into his refutation of Irvingite doctrine. It is clear that so elaborate a system is difficult of refutation, because it has hold on its adherents from so many sides. It is an exoteric belief which gives a sense of proud pre-eminence to those who possess it. The faithful who are over the age of twenty are sealed by an apostle after the analogy of the 144,000 whom the Apocalypse mentions as sealed

out of the twelve tribes. These chosen few are to be saved from the misery which will accompany the Second Advent, which is hourly expected. Irvingism, morever, affords full satisfaction to all the æsthetic side of religious feeling. Its ceremonial is elaborate and its organisation is complex. Its original fanaticism has been entirely curbed, and there is nothing to shock the most fastidious taste. It does not aim at proselytising, for in the nature of things few only are expected to receive it. Mr. Miller computes that this body does not exceed 6,000 adherents in Great Britain. We are afraid that the attractions which it offers to those who have adopted it will be too strong for Mr. Miller's arguments, though they are conceived in a spirit of Liberal Anglicanism. Those who are wavering, and are not deterred by the inherent difficulties of the historical aspect of the movement, which is one of continual disappointment in the expectation of the Second Advent will scarcely be deterred by argument about points of detail. The cogency of Mr. Miller's book will lie in the completeness with which he has treated his subject.

CURRENCY SCHEMES.

Money and its Laws. By Henry W. Poor. C. Kegan Paul and Co.
Money and Value. By Rowland Hamilton. Macmillan and Co.

Professor Jevons a short time ago stated, with reference to the condition and prospects of Political Economy, that "it lies rather dead in the public mind." This opinion is not apparently borne out by the interest displayed in the subject, which was never greater than it is. Theology and novels always excepted, there is no branch of literature about which more is published; and, if health is to be measured by activity, never was the science of wealth in a better condition. We agree, however, with Professor Jevons when he adds that "there have been for for some years back premonitory symptoms of disruption of the old orthodox school of Economists." The old landmarks are effaced; axioms are disputed; the very modes of investigation are the subjects of controversy; and the disputes which once concerned only the exact boundaries of the science now menace its separate existence. The differences among economists are, if possible, greater in Germany than here. If the results arrived at by English economists diverge widely from each other, at all events they are rarely in conflict as to the modes of investigation, which are, as a rule, those which Mill and Ricardo employed. But in Germany there is profound disagreement as to the very method of studying economical phenomena. There are blind adherents of Adam Smith; and on the other extreme are the active, sanguine *Katheder Socialisten*, including several men of European reputation, such as Roscher, Nasse, Knies, and Held, who believe that it is useless to study Political Economy apart from Jurisprudence and History.

We have placed at the head of this review the titles of two books which exhibit symptoms of this revolt. Their authors go their own way, very much in the spirit of "I care for nobody, and nobody cares for me." Mr. Poor, who examines the views of almost all the chief writers on Currency, from the time of Aristotle to his own day, finds few or none to his mind. The "mighty Stagyrite"—to whom Mr. Poor refers kindly as possessed of "an eminently active but an eminently unscientific mind"—is, in the end, contemptuously dismissed as the vendor of absurd ideas on the subject of money. Humes's 'Essay on Money' is quoted only to be summarily condemned as superficial and worthless. "He is still constantly quoted," says our peppery author, "with approbation upon the knotty points of monetary science, although, as far as any knowledge of the subject was concerned, a Kaffir might as well be quoted for an authoritative opinion upon the Code of Menu." Adam Smith fares no better. We are inundated with remarks on his "folly," and it is no surprise to come upon gibes such as this: "Nothing can be more puerile than such illustrations and arguments." "He (Adam Smith) is like a traveller who, lost in a wood or fog, always speedily comes round to the point at which he started." Most economists have been wont to speak with respect of the 'Report of the Bullion Committee,' which, if not an absolutely faultless theoretical exposition of the nature of money, at all events saved this country, at an important crisis, from gross blunders and delusions fashionable at the time. But in Mr. Poor's eyes it was worthless. "The only effect of the report was to establish on a still firmer basis that absurdest of all errors in monetary science, that value is no necessary attribute of money." Ricardo comes in for some hard knocks. "Never," says our amiable and modest author, "was there a more striking instance of confident assumption on the one hand and fatuity on the other." As to poor Mr. M'Culloch, "nothing can be more disgraceful in a man like him than the ignorance and assumption he displayed." After reviewing the economical creeds of Hume, Smith, Stewart, and M'Culloch, Mr. Poor lifts up his hands in unfeigned amazement at their incapacity to conduct an argument through a single paragraph, and at their "apparent feebleness of intellect." What is the explanation of this? Mr. Poor ingeniously solves the problem. They were Scotchmen, and "the uniformity in religion and dogma which so long prevailed in their country" prevented them grasping the truth so firmly as Mr. Poor. This is all very well, but it does not explain why Aristotle and Ricardo were the greatest ninnies of all—except, perhaps, Professor Bonamy Price, who indulges in "incoherent buffoonery" and "rant," and American writers in general, "who simply echo, without one spark of originality or independence, but with an extravagance perhaps characteristic of the nation, what they have found written on the other side of the water." No; Mr. Poor is ingenious, but he has not explained why it is that a parcel of fools have been beforehand with him in the investigation of the nature of currency. One of its mysteries, which he has left unexplained, is the fact that the only really sane persons who have grappled with the subject have been himself and a few others who agree with him.

Truth, we know, is at the bottom of a well, and it is no disparagement to Mr. Poor to say that we find a difficulty in discovering his own views. But once got at they are easy to understand. He is pleased in one passage to observe that "all previous attempts to solve this problem have failed," but we think that we have heard of Mr. Poor's solution before. His wish is a very old one—to dispense in the main with a medium of exchange intrinsically valuable. So far as transactions between different communities are concerned, this is provided for by bills of exchange. So long as the bills correspond to actual merchandise such a currency, "based not upon coin or bullion, but upon merchandise," is perfect. "There could be no inflation so long as the currency issued was really symbolic." So far as local currencies are concerned the same is substantially true; they are based not on coin or gold, but on merchandise, for which they serve as instruments of exchange, and the business of banks is to guarantee the immediate convertibility of their issues into merchandise or into coin. Their duty is to "issue instruments against merchandise actually in demand for consumption." In other words, Mr. Poor is one of the thousand persons who believe in the possibility of what they vaguely call a "symbolic currency." But while logical adherents of this system have boldly declared that it would be right to issue fearlessly notes against corn, tallow, timber, houses, and land, Mr. Poor is not so thorough going. Symbolic currencies are to supersede metallic currencies; but, if we understand him rightly, the wary banker would do well to keep a little coin by him to provide for contingencies. It would be thankless labour to criticise this crude theory; it speaks for itself, and we confess that we find Mr. Poor more interesting when abusive than when didactic. It will be no surprise to any one that he is an admirer of Law, and that he considers Hamilton's scheme for a United States bank, which was to issue symbolic currency, "a masterpiece of its kind," which "might, indeed, serve as a model for all countries and all times."

Mr. Hamilton's work, if known to Mr. Poor, would have met with some very strong language. But it is likely to be read by most persons with respect. He has many important qualifications for the arduous task of writing a complete work on the philosophy of money. He has taken great pains, we can see, to master the literature of the subject, and we observe that he is perfectly at home in

the lore of the Cambist, which is more than can be said of the majority of economists. He is an enemy to all extravagances or eccentricities, and we notice that in dealing with currency —a theme which seems capable of upsetting the stablest judgments—he writes with constant good sense, and that he shows an instinctive repugnance to all visionary, far-fetched views, the most valuable gift which can be possessed by a writer on currency. He errs, if at all, on the side of caution, and his is a fault, very rare with economists, to hold up whatever institutions exist as, if not the best, on the whole very good. It is needless to tell those who are acquainted with his work on 'the Resources of a Nation' that he does not plead for symbolic currencies or any fantasies of that sort. He is alive to the dangers inseparable from the use of any substitutes for a metallic currency, and in treating of the operation of bills of exchange or checks he does not, in our view, attribute sufficient importance to the extent to which they may, and in fact do, safely play the part of money. One of the most interesting portions of the volume is the chapter relating to Indian currency and the depreciation of silver. It is his opinion that it is useless to try at present to calculate the effect of the discoveries of silver and the changes in the currency arrangements of France and Germany. If the production of gold and silver is in excess of the wants of the world, it is better not to interpose legislative expedients; "the more directly a decline in value arising from such excess is brought to bear upon production the better for all the vast interests concerned in the stability of money value. For, I repeat, this excess will be cumulative." We do not find that in treating of this subject he draws attention to the operation of the laws of exchange as between this country and India, which tends to check the fall of silver. We note also occasional inaccuracies; for example, at page 204, there is an incorrect or ambiguous statement of the present condition of the law with respect to the transfer of warrants. But, on the whole, the book favourably impresses one by its accuracy and thoughtfulness, and it is a far safer guide than Mr. Poor's. The only very meritorious feature of the latter is the unquestionable learning which it displays. But he must not be surprised to find the English public hesitating to accept the guidance of an author who inserts in the table of contents a line to the following effect: "Mr. Mill a most striking example of unwarranted assumption and imbecility."

GOLD IN MIDIAN.

The Gold Mines of Midian and the Ruined Midianite Cities. A Fortnight's Tour in North-Western Arabia. By Richard F. Burton. Kegan Paul and Co.

Was the Ophir to which Solomon sent ships for gold, and to which Jehoshaphat fain would have sent them—the mysterious region so variously identified with Sofala and the Malabar coast and even the Malayan Chersonese—was this Ophir really no further away than the Midianitic peninsula between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Akaba? It may have been so if Captain Burton's discoveries prove authentic, notwithstanding the apparent absence of the precious stones (unless turquoise and tourmaline may pass muster as such) and "almug trees" which are also represented to have been brought thence, an affirmation not expressly made with respect to the "apes and peacocks." Captain Burton's researches seem, at all events, to have established that, if Solomon did not actually draw gold from Midian, he very well might have done. The testimony of Numbers respecting the metallic wealth of the country is amply confirmed, and sufficient evidence is produced of a respectable condition of civilisation down to the Mohammedan period. So far Captain Burton's expedition must be pronounced a success. The fulfilment of his sanguine anticipations of making the peninsula an Ophir for Ismail Pasha is quite another matter. The evidence contained in the present volume, we should consider, does not go beyond the establishment of a fair *prima facie* case. The exploration was hasty and cursory, and the scientific results do not seem to be worked out with the accuracy desirable. Criticism, however, would be premature in view of the second and more complete survey which Captain Burton has just concluded, the results of which are as yet only known by a telegraphic summary. Through this medium we hear of extensive discoveries of silver; gold is as yet scarcely mentioned. In the volume before us, on the contrary, the more precious metal plays the more prominent part. It will be judicious to confine ourselves for the present to an account of the original discovery and of Captain Burton's prosecution of it.

The Hargreaves of Midian, if it is to have one, is "a Tartar of the Kipchak tribe of Kirghiz," Haji Wali Alioghlú Arslánoglú, a widely-travelled personage now numbering eighty-two summers and an old acquaintance of Captain Burton's. Returning from his second pilgrimage to Mecca one March day in 1849, the Haji was led by the will of Allah to seat himself under a certain tree. "Seeing the torrent-bed sparkle —probably with mica—he scooped up a double handful of the sand, tied it in his kerchief, and stowed it away in his pilgrim's chest." On his return to Alexandria he submitted it to an assayer, who "pounded the sand in a mortar, mixed it with water, and by means of quicksilver produced in his presence a bit of gold about half the size of a grain of wheat." An apparent success of this kind is frequently the result of trickery, but the Egyptian metallurgist seems to have proved his faith in his analysis by himself repairing to the spot in quest of the metal. He perished on the expedition, and the authorities refused to follow up the discovery for alleged reasons worthy of Lycurgus or those political economists who most stoutly contest the intrinsic value of the precious metals, but most probably from disbelief in the Haji's story. In 1853 Haji Wali became intimate with Captain Burton, and one day "with much show of mystery showed me a little of the sand. I examined it with a Stanley lens, and distinctly saw minute dots of gold, while my complete confidence in the honour and honesty of the man forbade the suspicion that he had peppered the stuff by mixing up gold filings with it." Such a trick would have been no novelty. Not many years ago a French resident in Egypt nearly succeeded in forming a company to work the sands of the desert, which he asserted to be auriferous. Doubts having arisen, the specimens he produced were submitted to examination, when they were found, firstly, to be alloyed, and, secondly, to be alloyed in exactly the same proportion as a napoleon!

Haji Wali vainly endeavoured to induce Captain Burton to accompany him in a search for the treasure, and the Captain as vainly endeavoured to induce the Egyptian Government to interest itself in the business. The friends parted; the Captain's roamings extended over considerably more than half the world, but with true British tenacity and secretiveness he neither forgot the matter nor divulged it. Returning to Egypt in 1877, he was at last enabled to carry out his plans by the support of the present Khedive and under the guidance of Haji Wali, who still survived to lend his assistance. On March 31 Captain Burton departed on an expedition possibly pregnant with momentous consequences, but whose slender details almost disappear behind the characteristic mass of historical, scientific, and geographical compilation which, however interesting in itself, commonly gives the traveller something of the semblance of a book-maker. It seems ungracious to complain of what is really an advantage to the reader, but it is impossible to avoid the remark that Captain Burton's book would have been a small one if nobody but Captain Burton had contributed to it.

The actual history of the expedition may be briefly told; everything essential, indeed, is comprehended within a few pages by Captain Burton himself in his official report to the Khedive. At Ayminah Bay, a port in the Red Sea, a little westward of the Gulf of Akaba, traces of ancient constructions were discovered with vestiges of an aqueduct testifying to Roman occupancy, and of smelting works showing that mining operations had at one time been carried on. According to the Bedouins, more extensive remains of the latter description existed in the interior, but time and other circumstances did not allow of any verification of this statement. Generally speaking, indeed, the survey seems to have been carried out with a remissness which it is to be hoped that Captain Burton's better opportunities in his second visit have enabled him to amend. At length, however, a metallic vein was found

presenting evident traces of having been formerly worked. It proved to be "a highly composite formation, containing some ten metals, the base being titaniferous iron." The base and superstructure too, we should say, the oxide of iron proving on analysis to amount to between eighty and ninety per cent. of the whole. There were from three to four per cent. of copper, and about 1-1000th part of silver, scarcely an encouraging prospect. Other veins may, of course, prove more opulent; and the main object of discovering gold was attained when, after leaving Ayminah Bay, the expedition directed its course to Makna, a roadstead situated some distance up the eastern shore of the Gulf of Akaba. Here also are indications of an ancient settlement, and, when Captain Burton and his party got fairly into the mountains, "almost every stone we broke contained spots or lines of mineral, even the hard, black and porous basalt showing silvery streaks which upon analysis proved to be free gold." The report of the official analysers, it is added, confirms this assertion, but the per-centage of the precious metal is not stated.

It is thus pretty evident that, apart from any discoveries which Captain Burton may possibly have made in his second expedition, the reputation of Midian as an auriferous country in our time remains to be established. Captain Burton has proved its former productiveness by copious citations from ancient writers and the mining works, with their appendages, discovered by himself. The age is past, he admits, "of nuggets which the old Greek describes as ranging between the size of an olive stone and a walnut." But it does not follow that an opening for scientific enterprise may not remain. "The Land of Midian is at present much like California when the pick and fan men had done their work. She is still wealthy, but her stage is that when machinery must take the place of the human arm." Admitting the correctness of this diagnosis, human labour will still be requisite even for crushing quartz. Where is it to come from? and how are the labourers to be kept alive? Captain Burton's experience of a visit in April gives no notion of the difficulty of mere existence, not to say of severe toil, in this torrid region during half the year. He thinks the Egyptian convicts might be employed, but forced labour in mines has ever been accompanied by circumstances shocking to humanity; and, whatever these men's offences, they have not been sentenced to a lingering death. Captain Burton is, perhaps, hardly sufficiently attentive to such considerations. "The same answer (gold was becoming too common) was made to me by a Secretary of State when I offered to open up some most valuable diggings on the west coast of Africa if he would appoint me governor, assist me with half a West India regiment, and *not inquire too curiously into local matters.*" We suspect that the phrase we have italicised attracted the secretary's attention as it has attracted ours, and that his reply was, or was meant to have been, not that gold was growing too common, but that it might be bought too dear.

In fact, we can expect little benefit to Egypt from any achievement in gold mining under the present corrupt and extravagant *régime*. Every addition to its resources that might make the fortune of a well administered State seems to plunge Egypt more and more hopelessly into insolvency. Sugar, cotton, irrigation, railways, canals, have successively been added to its apparent means of wealth, and each has resulted only in an increase of the national indebtedness. The same would unquestionably be the case with any development of the mineral resources of the Khedive's dominions—a new loan, a new opera house, perhaps in due time a new financial commission of inquiry. It would be far better that the mineral treasures of the Midianitic peninsula, like the gold of the fairy legend, remained buried until they would be disinterred by honest hands. At present, however, controversy on this point is superfluous; for, after all Captain Burton has said and done, the existence of metallic wealth to a remunerative amount remains to be demonstrated. His book, nevertheless, is something better than a mere prospectus of a doubtful undertaking. We have to thank him not only for a skilful digest of all accessible information respecting the peninsula, but also for a series of brilliant descriptive studies of the vegetable life, and the atmospheric tints that clothe and diversify these sterile rocks; and the many-lined profusion of animated existence, ichthyological, ceralline, zoophytic, which, in forcible contrast to the penury of the land, renders the Red Sea one of the most populous of marine regions. The further prosecution of his researches may result in considerable acquisitions to archæology, and perhaps to natural history also.

HUXLEY ON THE STUDY OF NATURE.

Physiography: an Introduction to the Study of Nature. By T. H. Huxley, F.R.S. London: Macmillan and Co. 1878.

The objects of this work are explained by the author in his preface as follows:—

> It appeared to me to be plainly dictated by common sense that the teacher who wishes to lead his pupil to form a clear mental picture of the order which pervades the multiform and endlessly shifting phenomena of nature should commence with the familiar facts of the scholar's daily experience and that, from the firm ground of such experience, he should lead the beginner, step by step, to remoter objects and to the less readily comprehensible relations of things. In short, that the knowledge of the child should of set purpose be made to grow, in the same manner as that of the human race has spontaneously grown. I conceived that a vast amount of knowledge respecting natural phenomena and their interdependence, and even some practical experience of scientific method, could be conveyed, with all the precision of statement which is what distinguishes science from common information; and yet without overstepping the comprehension of learners who possessed no further share of preliminary educational discipline than that which falls to the lot of the boys and girls who pass through an ordinary primary school. And I thought that, if my plan could be properly carried out, it would not only yield results of value in themselves, but would facilitate the subsequent entrance of the learners into the portals of the special sciences.

In fact, this book is a general sketch of the leading phenomena of nature of the same sort as those given in works on physical geography, but it avoids the faults of most elementary works published under this title, which too often, as Professor Huxley says, "begin at the wrong end and too often terminate in an *omnium gatherum* of scraps of all sorts of undigested and unconnected information." It also quite carries out the author's intention of starting from simple phenomena within everybody's range of observation and working gradually and articulately from them to the more obscure operations of nature, and the author thus avoids what he considers to be another fault of these books, for he does not think that "a description of the earth which commences by telling a child that it is an oblate spheroid, moving round the sun in an eliptical orbit, and ends without giving him the slightest hint towards understanding the ordnance map of his own county, or any suggestion as to the meaning of the phenomena offered by the brook which runs through his village, or the gravel pit whence the roads are mended, is calculated either to interest or instruct." Professor Huxley's work, however, will both interest and instruct. He takes as his text the phenomena to be seen from London Bridge—the vast mass of water, the fact that it ebbs and flows, that it ebbs for a longer time than it flows, that it is muddy—and from these points he leads his reader on until he has sketched out for him the outlines of the great study of those physical phenomena which affect the earth.

Of course, a man of Professor Huxley's high position in the world of science has a right to adopt any nomenclature which seems good to him. The title "Physical Geography," as we see from the extracts already made, had become distasteful to him, associated as it was with works offensive to his clear ideas of what scientific education ought to be, and so he says, "I borrowed the title 'Physiography,' which had already been long applied in a different sense to a department of mineralogy, for my subject, inasmuch as I wished to draw a clear line of demarcation, both as to matter and method, between it and what is commonly understood by 'Physical Geography.'" We know that it is presumptuous to criticise the author's action in a matter in which he is one of the first authorities of the day, but still we cannot help feeling that if he could not bring himself to call this book a work on "Physical Geography" (which in the true sense of the title it is), he might have contented himself with his second title, "An introduction to the study of nature," which really describes the object of the book far better than any

single word can do, as it is not a work "on any particular branch of natural knowledge, but on natural phenomena in general." However, the word has been now turned to its new purpose, and has been adopted by other writers, and may, therefore, be said to have passed into the language, and must therefore be accepted. No doubt, captious philologists may take it up and waste time and space by endless discussions as to its suitability, as they have done in the case of the word "biology" and many others, but we earnestly hope that this may not be the case. If a new name is wanted for the subject, Physiography will answer well enough for all practical purposes.

Those who have read this teacher's beautiful essay 'On a Piece of Chalk' will at once understand how well he has carried out his present task. As in that paper he showed how by carefully examining into the properties of a lump of common chalk we gradually are led through almost the whole range of scientific knowledge, so in the present work he shows how, in order to understand the existence of the Thames as we see it, we must make ourselves acquainted with the physical causes which have made the whole earth what it is. The subject of the interdependence of all physical and vital phenomena is a favourite one with Professor Huxley. There is hardly any point of teaching on which he is more eloquent and earnest than this; and, as the reader proceeds in this work, its author's aim is carried out, and "step by step the conviction dawns upon the learner that, to attain to even an elementary conception of what goes on in his parish, he must know something about the universe; that the pebble he kicks aside would not be what it is and where it is unless a particular chapter of the earth's history, finished untold ages ago, had been exactly what it was." This book is a good example of the false nature of Professor Virchow's fears that, if we allow our science teachers to know of the existence of such hypotheses as the doctrine of evolution, &c., they will infallibly teach them as true to the young pupils in their schools. Here is a work written by the greatest English champion of the doctrine of evolution in which there is not a single phrase which need offend the most fervent believer in the doctrines of special creation and divine direction of the universe. The only reference to the name of Darwin is in the chapter on coral reefs. As almost all our knowledge on this subject comes from his monograph on the structure and distribution of coral reefs, the reference was unavoidable. But of doubtful or disputed subjects there is not a word; the book teaches only what is ascertained to be true, and the author does not even adopt the freedom permitted by Virchow of putting deduced hypotheses on the same page as the facts, only "printed in smaller type under the text." The book is intended clearly as an educational work, and would do most good in the hands of an intelligent teacher who could follow out the hint given in the preface, and use it as the basis of lectures or *viva voce* lessons, introducing as his illustrations the country surrounding his school, substituting the local river for the Thames, and thus giving his pupils "hints towards understanding the ordnance map of the country," and explaining "the phenomena of the village brook and the gravel pit whence the roads are mended." Although it is primarily intended for educational purposes, nevertheless 'Physiography' will be found a most interesting, fascinating, and instructive book by all classes of readers.

The illustrations are well designed and clearly drawn and reproduced, and above all, wherever reference letters are used, they are so placed as to be readily visible at the first glance.

BY PROXY.

By Proxy. By James Payn. Two Vols. London: Chatto and Windus.

It is rarely that we take up a novel of which the plot is so absorbing that we find ourselves longing to read the last chapter before we are half-way through the first volume, while the dialogue and the descriptions are so full of wit that it requires an effort to skip a single page. A novel in which we are distracted by such rival motives is one to be read twice, and this will bear reading not only twice but many times. Mr. Payn's wit is not of the boisterous kind, but keen and nimble, lying in wait for us in all sorts of unexpected places, lurking generally in some eccentric idea or quaint turn of phrase, always setting itself when it darts out from its concealment to tickle the fancy in preference to the sides of the reader. There are happily many kinds and degrees of wit, and Mr. Payn belongs to the school of which our most illustrious examples are Thomas Fuller and Charles Lamb. He is eminently a witty writer who, without any appearance of effort, in the most unaffected and spontaneous way, keeps the intellect in an agreeable titilation from page to page. And yet, if we were called upon to substantiate this statement by quotations, we should find ourselves in a difficulty. The complaint is often made that the recorded sayings of men who enjoyed a reputation for wit in their day and generation do not make it easy for posterity to understand how their reputation was acquired. More particularly in the case of the professional wits of the Middle Ages, the licensed Court jesters, we cannot help wondering how their repartees and shrewd thrusts, which were so heartily enjoyed by their contemporaries that they have been handed down as valuable possessions for the lovers of mirth in all times, can ever have raised a laugh. The explanation probably is that their merry jests, verbal as well as practical, owed most of their point to the circumstances in which they were uttered and the persons at whom they were aimed, and that the circumstances and personalities were of the evanescent and not of the permanent kind, special products of their time, and not such as are perpetually reproducing themselves among mankind. There are, as everybody knows, such things as family jokes, which never fail to create intense amusement in the intimate circle, but seem excessively stupid and unmeaning to the uninitiated outsider. Now we do not mean to say that any of the quips and cranks with which 'By Proxy' is thickly strewn would appear as pointless as family jokes if divorced from their context; still they have so much of an esoteric character, that they would not appear to advantage in quotation. To this extent they are, for the most part, family jokes, that they are played off upon the personages that figure in the novel, and are not fully intelligible without a knowledge of the peculiarities of those personages.

When we consider that, combined with unflagging brilliancy of writing, we have in Mr. Payn's last novel strong and clearly-defined characters, a plot that might be made the basis of a thrilling melodrama, and tenderly drawn scenes that would move the most hardened reader to tears, we feel bound to assign it a very high place indeed among recent works of fiction. The substance is so excellent that we can do Mr. Payn no injury by telling the main lines of his story. The opening scenes, the prologue to the drama which follows, are laid in China; and the author, though here and there he may be caught tripping in minute details, has been at great pains to invest his incidents with the proper local colour. Two Englishmen are represented sailing up the Cha-Ho from Shang-hae to see the wonders of the Flowery Land. One of them, an officer in the army, Captain Conway, is a modest, sensible, prudent man, who has a cosmopolitan dislike to treating foreigners with harshness, and is besides aware of the danger of giving offence to the native population in a land where intruders are held in little respect. His companion, Ralph Pennicuik, a man of fortune who, after exhausting the pleasures of European travel, has come to China in search of novelty, is a less accommodating person. He is supercilious towards the "crocks," as he contemptuously terms the Chinese, and he has a love of mischief which leads him into scrapes. The travellers happening, in the course of their voyage up the river, to pass a temple where the Chinese are celebrating the birthday of Buddha, Pennicuik insists upon joining the worshippers, and half in frolic, half in greed, seizes an opportunity of stealing a precious stone which is one of the most sacred relics of the place. The sacrilege is discovered by the captain of their boat's crew, of whom Pennicuik has previously made a watchful and vindictive enemy by chucking his daughter under the chin and knocking him down when he remonstrated. Fu-chow denounces the criminal to the authorities; there is a popular tumult, Pennicuik is seized and condemned to the extreme punishment of being

tied to a post and cut into a thousand pieces. Conway, who is a poor man, tired of life, and encumbered with a wife and daughter in England for whom he wishes to provide, offers to take Pennicuik's place, and suffer punishment in his stead, on condition that 20,000*l.* be paid to his family. The offer is accepted, and by a free use of bribes the Chinese officials are induced to allow the proxy. Pennicuik returns home, paying liberally for an expedition to attempt the rescue of his friend, and thereby to some extent removing an impression that he is callous and close-fisted, yet not without exciting a certain suspicion, because Conway's character is well known, and it is considered highly unlikely that he would have perpetrated such a freak. Once, however, fairly out of danger, Pennicuik begins to repent of his bargain, and decides, after long hesitation, the various moods of which are traced by Mr. Payn with remarkable skill, that, instead of paying the sum stipulated for to Conway's daughter, he will offer her, as if out of his own generosity, an annuity of one-third of the value. He is haunted by remorse, and takes to drinking. To relieve his mind from the secret which is preying upon him, he determines to go into Parliament, and stands for the borough of Slowcomb. But here retribution begins to overtake him. In the course of the election a placard is hoisted by his enemies raising the question of "What he did at Dhulang." No direct disclosure is made, yet this question proves a great torment to him. It is taken up by the Opposition Press, and inuendoes are thrown out which fill him with unutterable alarm, because they show that they are inspired by some person acquainted with the real facts of the case. He is urged by his son, who is in love with Conway's daughter, and is, of course, entirely ignorant of what happened at Dhulang, to silence his accusers by asking for an inquiry into the circumstances of the death of Captain Conway and moving that a pension be granted to his surviving relatives. Pennicuik is at last worked up to the point of doing this, but on his way to the House he is confronted by Conway, supposes he has seen a ghost, is utterly unhinged, and dies after making a full confession to his son, who in the end is happily united to Miss Conway. We need not follow Mr. Payn into the details of Conway's escape from his supposed doom in China, nor into the adventures of his daughter, who is left fatherless and motherless in England, and in the course of her struggle to support herself encounters the dead come to life again.

Again and again we find ourselves lingering over passages in 'By Proxy' after we have resolved to lay it down. The minor personages in the story, Mr. and Mrs. Wardlaw, the vulgar, kind-hearted, retired tradesman and his wife, who take Ellen Conway under their care; Miss Milburn, the prudent sister, who exerts herself to prevent a marriage between her brother and the penniless girl; Mr. Major, the great local politician, who procures the return of Ralph Pennicuik for Slowcomb, are described with great spirit and humour. The scenes between Nelly and her friends, the Wardlaws, in which the oddities of the frank and genial pair are tenderly contrasted with their overflowing kindliness of heart, their innocent devices for being of service to her while pretending that she is doing services to them, their exultation over their own skill when they succeed and their distress when they fail, are as fresh and delightful as if Dickens had never succeeded in depicting the same sort of character, because Mr. Payn follows the bent of his own temperament, and cannot be counted among the many imitators of his great predecessor. We can cordially recommend 'By Proxy' to all lovers of gentle humour and playful wit.

STAR GAZING.

Star Gazing, Past and Present. By Norman Lockyer, F.R.S. London: Macmillan and Co. 1878.

Of late years the exceedingly low prices at which opticians are able to sell small astronomical telescopes of good material and workmanship has made physical astronomy a very popular hobby with amateurs, and the Board of Trade examination for yachtsmen has given great stimulus to the study of astronomy of position, the good example set by Mr. Brassey of passing this examination having been largely followed by yacht owners, who in many cases have followed up their studies and have become amateur astronomers. Although very many popular works on astronomy have been published lately, there was still room for a sound, clear, popular book, which should give a general outline of both divisions of the subject, and should embody the latest discoveries in celestial spectroscopy and photography, two methods of observation which are increasing in importance from day to day. Mr. Lockyer's book is, therefore, well timed, and will be found very valuable by those who wish to get a general idea of this branch of science without going into the minutiæ of its practical details. The work is well written, most of the explanations being very clear, and the illustrations are very good. As might be expected from the investigations with which Mr. Lockyer's name is chiefly associated, we find that by far the best part of the book is that which deals with physical astronomy, and more especially with celestial spectroscopy. And here it is curious to remark the way in which different observers prefer different instruments. Mr. Lockyer obviously does not find the objective prism answer at all well in his hands, whilst the eminent Italian astronomer, the late Padre Secchi, found it most useful. It is true that the objection raised by the author, that with this instrument it is necessary to direct the telescope to a point at some distance from the object to be observed, is in a great measure overcome by the inclined finder, of which no mention is made in the work; but there must be other objections to this form of celestial spectroscope, as an astronomer of Mr. Lockyer's eminence could hardly be ignorant of this device for easily getting the object into the field of the telescope. The chapter on the "Adjustments of the Equatorial Telescope" will be found most useful to amateur "star-gazers," as this instrument no doubt is, as the writer says, "*par excellence*, the instrument of the amateur." The adjustments are so clearly set out, and the reasons for making them and their effects are so well and fully explained, that the possessor of a small equatorial could begin work as an amateur star-gazer by the help of this chapter and a copy of the 'Nautical Almanac' alone.

The general reader will probably find the chapter on the "Clock and Chronometer" by far the most interesting in the whole book. In it the history of time-keepers is sketched out, and the leading improvements in time-keepers are well and clearly explained. The author's power of explanation, indeed, is so great that he even succeeds in describing the Astronomer Royal's escapement now fitted to the Greenwich clock in about a page in spite of its great complexity. The subject of time, indeed, is a prominent feature of this work. In it will be found descriptions of the whole of our time-keeping arrangements, the difference between mean and siderial time is explained, and the machinery of time-telegraphy now in use, whereby the Post Office time-signals are sent, the time-balls at different stations are let drop, and local clocks are regulated, is made clear to even the most unmechanical reader, the whole of these operations being effected by the "chronopher" at Greenwich, a somewhat complex instrument which is well described and clearly figured. Celestial photography is shortly explained, and the latest improvements in this art are described. Many readers will no doubt be somewhat surprised to learn that for many purposes observations can be made mechanically by means of photography with much smaller errors than would be made by human observers.

It is a matter of some regret that this work contains no chapter on the application of astronomy to surveying and navigation. Mr. Lockyer's clear style, and his power of explaining abstruse points and making them intelligible to ordinary readers, would have been most valuable in making this branch of applied science clear to many who, for want of mathematical knowledge, are unable to read the text-books of the subject. However, the book is so complete that this omission in no way detracts from its value. Mr. Lockyer has done much good work of late years in popularising science, but this is perhaps the best and most valuable book which he has produced for this purpose. It is a work which not only asserts facts, but also gives the outlines of methods and which also, by the quantity of history which it contains

shows how men have gradually emancipated themselves from error and arrived at truth. And in this science truth is valuable for its own sake and for its own sake alone. For all practical purposes, for human convenience, for making life easy to the world at large, which so many people suppose to be the sole aims of science, it makes but little difference whether we suppose the world to be the centre of the universe, and all the heavenly bodies to revolve round it with somewhat varying motions, as our ancestors did, or whether we believe, what we now know to be true, that the earth moves round the sun, and revolves on its own axis, and has also some other small movements. Indeed, for practical purposes, we still talk of a star's rising and setting, of the ecliptic as the sun's path in the heavens, of the sun being in such and such parts of the heavens, and generally we treat the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies as if they were real motions. But science has higher aims than making tools for the world's journeymen. Science teaches thought, and strives to arrive at such modes of thought and such means of attacking unknown problems as shall at all times lead to truth, whether that truth can be sent to market or no; and it is for this reason that it is important to discover the real explanation of Natural Phenomena, even though the untrue hypothesis which is swept away by the truth may fit the different phases of the phenomena perfectly, and may be even more manageable for practical purposes than the true explanation. Astronomy, however, has been by no means idle as a tool maker, and at this present time, thanks to the labours of astronomers and mathematicians, any man of ordinary intelligence can find, by the help of a few instruments and two or three books, his position on the earth's surface, within half a mile or so, after very little practice, and this with no more need of understanding the mathematical and astronomical theorems with which he is dealing than a ploughboy has of being acquainted with the anatomy of his own body before he is able to walk across a field. However, as we have before said, this part of the subject is not treated of in the work before us, but the chapters on the methods of determining the positions of the stars in the heavens will do much to clear away difficulties if they be carefully read before attacking ordinary text-books on navigation. 'Star Gazing' has had all done for it that clear printing, good illustration, and handsome binding can do, and its appearance is as attractive as its contents are valuable.

THE LUSIADS.

The Lusiads of Camoens. Translated into English verse by J. J. Aubertin. 2 vols. C. Kegan Paul and Co.

The charge so often wrongly urged against the literatures of small countries, that they possess but one important writer, is truly brought against that of Portugal. Holland is not summed up in Vondel nor Hungary in Petõfi, but it is a fact that without Camoens Portuguese poetry would hardly exist. There are other names than his in the literary annals of the great sixteenth century, but we should hardly hear of them but for his sake. Gil Vicente hewed out the way, Sa de Miranda and Ferreira smoothed it, but no one traversed it with any magnificence but Camoens. The more we reflect on t.e isolation of this poet—for his followers were even lesser figures than his predecessors—the more are we astonished at the ripeness and affluence of the genius that lifted him at once into the Temple of Fame. For Camoens was the greatest poet of his age in Europe, receiving, as from the brows of Ariosto, the laurel which now for the first time left Italy, to return, after his death, to deck the brows of Tasso, manifestly coloured by its Hesperidean journey. That Camoens had read the two "Orlandos," especially that he was familiar with Bojardos, cannot be doubted, but the great feature of his own poem is its entire originality. A new temper of the human mind finds its first expression in the 'Lusiads.' No longer tales of chivalry, feats of knights adventuring through mythical forests in search of ladies fair, occupies the European Muse. Spenser, writing half a century later, is still distinctly antiquated by the side of Camoens' robust and modern spirit. The latter deals with actual events, with veritable places, and his sonorous verse utters without shame the titles of new arms and new articles of commerce. This modern colouring is also strongly mingled with humanism and the mythology of the Renaissance. Like all the poets of his age, Camoens delights to introduce the fierce Lyœus, rosy Venus and a troop of nymphs and satyrs. The 'Lusiads' are full of this element, so little in the taste of our own day. The conquering navies of Portugal, bent on spreading Christianity through the East, are thwarted by Bacchus, but assisted by Venus Acidalia; and a *Ilha dos Amores*, a sort of Cyprian Delos, floats over the waves to solace them after their labours are over. This inconsistency has proved a stumbling-block to many critics; those who cannot deny the vigour, the charm, the infinite harmony of the poem, have denied it praise on the score of its religious confusion. That the Cross, under the protection of Aphrodite, should proceed to the conquest of India in an epic devised to glorify Christianity, is too much for critical endurance. But we prefer to see, with Tieck, in this blending of the Christian and the Pagan worlds one of the greatest beauties of this wonderful work, and to claim for Camoens a place next to Dante as the most skilful of poets precisely in his treatment of allegory. Moreover we refuse to see in 'The Lusiads' any design to glorify the Christian religion. As little would it be true to say that the hero of the poem is Vasco de Gama. Portugal is the hero, and the only design of the whole is to glorify the Portuguese nation. 'The Lusiads' is the most truly national of all modern epics, and indeed it ranks in this respect beside the masterpieces of Homer and Virgil only; no other epical poem can claim in any degree the same importance as the utterance of the finest intellect of a nation magnifying that nation's noblest deeds.

In 1572, after so many strange vicissitudes, after being begun in quiet at Santarem, listening to the bullets at Ceuta, crossing the main to Goa, being shipwrecked and swum to shore with in Cochin China, after nearly ceasing to exist again in India and in Africa, 'Os Lusiados' saw the light first at Lisbon. The earliest edition, which is of extreme rarity, is a quarto, neatly printed on wretched paper, like most Peninsular books of its time, and represents itself, between the ricketty pillars of an ill-drawn temple, to be the work of D. Luiz Camoes. Such was the modest and unattractive form in which the glory of Portugal first saw the light. A second edition, in the same style, appeared in the same year. The troubles of the nation followed close upon the deaths of King Sebastian in 1578 and of the poet in 1579. During the "sixty years' captivity" little attention was paid to the great poem, but in other countries it attracted notice. Tasso admired it passionately, and imitated it; before very long, versions of it were made into the various European languages, and even into Hebrew; long before a century was out, England possessed a very spirited translation from the hand of Sir Richard Fanshawe, done into ottava rima, the measure of the original. Until now this version of Fanshawe's has been the best, though far from the most popular; for W. J. Mickle's, published in 1776 in heroic couplets, has taken almost the place of a classic, an honour entirely undeserved. We have no hesitation, however, in saying, after careful perusal of the whole of Mr. Aubertin's translation, that he has surpassed all his predecessors, and that he has succeeded better than any of them in producing an enjoyable poem, and yet one that is marvellously close to the original. It has often been noted that when Sir Richard Fanshawe prepared his version he had not the intimate knowledge of Portuguese that he afterwards acquired, and, moreover, as a prisoner in Lord Strafford's house at Tankersley he had little opportunity of referring to any authorities. When, in 1661, he was sent as ambassador to the Court of Lisbon he intended to correct the numerous errors in his 'Luçiad,' but the extraordinary pressure of business and his early death prevented this. His version is often dignified and stirring, and far superior in this respect to Mickle's or to Musgrave's, but his versification is rugged and harsh. This is a great fault in translating the orbed and effluent harmonies of Camoens, one of the most polished and eloquently musical of poets. In this respect Mr. Aubertin, whose verse is exceedingly supple, so far as to remind us sometimes of the narrative verse of Shelley, succeeds far

better. It is a curious fact, while the name of Shelley occurs to us, to note that Camoens and he had the same love of certain full-sounding words, such as "crystalline," "concave," and "promontory." Mr. Aubertin, as a rule, keeps exceedingly close to the original—sometimes, indeed, too close to be easily intelligible. A curious instance of this we have noted in the 6th Canto, where the translator prints:—

> O'er Oriental waters now they fly,
> Upon the Indian seas, and of the Sun,
> Who rises fire, the couches they descry,

a collection of words that really signifies nothing, unless we turn to the original and read:—

> As ondas navegevam do Oriente
> Já nos marcs da India, e enxergavam
> Os thalamos do Sol, que nasce ardente,

"they navigate the waves of the Orient, upon the seas of India, and they descry the couches of the Sun, who is born burning." But it is rarely, indeed, that Mr. Aubertin has succumbed so tamely to the difficulties of his task. As an example of his usually smooth and picturesque style, we may quote his version of the world-famous passage in the ninth canto, describing the interior of the Ilha dos Amores:—

> In a soft vale, which doth the mounts divide,
> Each crystal river comes to join its stream,
> Where all a mirror form, which, spreading wide,
> Is beautiful as any one could dream;
> A graceful grove, which hangs on every side,
> Like one about to adorn himself doth seem,
> Who in the brilliant glass his form doth spy,
> Which on its bosom paints him faithfully.
>
> A thousand trees towards heaven their summits raise,
> With fruits all odoriferous and fair:
> The orange in its produce bright displays
> The tint that Daphne carried in her hair:
> The citron on the ground its branches lays,
> Laden with yellow weights it cannot bear;
> The beauteous lemons, which the whole perfume,
> The virgin bosom in their form assume.
>
> The forest trees, which on the hills combine
> To ennoble them, with leafy hairs o'ergrown,
> Are poplars of Alcides; laurels shine,
> The which the shining God loved as his own:
> Myrtles of Cytherea, with the pine
> Of Cybele, by other love o'erthrown:
> The spearing cypress tree points out where lies
> The seat of the ethereal paradise.

It is only when a work of this kind is very well performed that the reviewer can particularise errors. We note one alexandrine (vol. i., p. 287, l. 26—oddly enough, the line mentions Alexander), and one case of defective rhyme (vol ii., p. 247, ll. 26, 28). It will be exceedingly easy to correct these in a future edition. We hesitate in challenging Mr. Aubertin's knowledge of Portuguese, but we venture to suggest that in canto 10, st. 137, Camoens was speaking not of the almonds, but of the aloes of Socotra. For errors of a more important kind we have searched in vain.

It is difficult to say whether 'The Lusiads,' even in this attractive form, will ever become a popular poem in England. The 'Jerusalem' of Fairfax, with which we may hesitate but can hardly refuse to compare it, has become one of the most universal of our poetical classics. But the large portion of 'The Lusiads' which is taken up with obscure details of Portuguese history, and especially the curiously involved and infelicitous opening address, will always tend to keep it unfamiliar. But to the student of poetry it is invaluable. It has a sustained power and beauty quite its own, and it possesses the singular excellence of being almost the only poem that treats successfully of tropical life and landscape. The pathos of the Ignez de Castro episode, the sublimity of the vision of the Spirit of the Cape, the vivacity of the sketch of Calicut and the luxurious beauty of the vision of the Island of Love are the leading examples of qualities in all of which Camoens excelled. But perhaps what leaves most impression on the mind after reading his epic is the buoyant and unbroken melody with which, as with a crystal element, he surrounds the whole fabric of his story.

INDIAN TRAVELS.

Our Life and Travels in India. By W. Wakefield, M.D. London: Sampson Low and Co.

We have failed to discover the purpose of this book, unless it be that of the author's private delectation. Of its nineteen chapters, fourteen or fifteen ought to have been expunged, and the proofs of the remaining portions almost all re-written before the transmission of the final "revise" to the printers. Dr. Wakefield might, in that case, have produced a *bonâ fide* book about life and travels in India, though, judging from the specimens before us, we much doubt whether it would be worth the labour of reading. The volume seems either a triumph of dulness or of hardihood or of both. It is a book of Indian life and travels in much the same sense in which 'Balfour's Encyclopædia'—the dullest and most unblushingly fragmentary production of its kind—is a book of life and travels. By far the greatest portion of it contains nothing but bald and meagre summaries of history, geography, religion, and science, such as any one who had never been in India might have compiled from 'Balfour' or some guide book. His description of the architectural glories of Agra and Futtehpore Sikri appear to have been wholly taken from Mr. A. G. Keene's admirable volume, to which Dr. Wakefield frequently acknowledges his obligations. Mr. Bayard Taylor's feminine enthusiasms over the Taj and the Motee Musjid at Agra are also put under contribution; but we feel almost certain that our author's acquaintance with Mr. Taylor extends no further than to the quotations in Mr. Keene's own book. The Taj is, no doubt, one of the wonders not only of India, but of the world. But whenever a man begins to express his feelings about it in that strain of mawkish sentiment peculiar to travellers like Mr. Taylor and Dr. Wakefield, you may feel assured that his architectural perception is not of the finest. The very fact that the writer has introduced a photograph of the Taj into his book is rather inconsistent with any claim he may have to be considered a person of taste. It is impossible to photograph that unique building properly. Only a moonlight painting of it can reawaken in one's mind the feelings suggested by the contemplation of the snowy-white Taj itself. One cannot but doubt the writer's qualifications for art criticism when one comes upon an observation like the following, in reference not to "Saracenic," but to Hindoo architectural monuments: "Strictly speaking, none of these buildings possess the elegant proportions of the edifices of the Greeks." What is the meaning of "strictly speaking"? and who would dream of instituting a comparison between Hindoo and Greek architecture, either in respect of elegant proportion or any other attribute? Dr. Wakefield might just as well compare The Parthenon with Westminster Abbey.

Our author is hardly more reliable as a guide in matters of fact than in matters of taste. His account of the Bombay Towers of Silence (burial places of the Parsees) is very incomplete, and what there is of it is wrong. Instead of "one or more" towers, there are half a dozen; and their interior arrangement is of a far more complex character than our traveller is aware of. Here is a piece of information which will astonish none more than the Parsees themselves:—

> It is said to be the custom for the mourning relatives and friends of the deceased to watch most anxiously the dispersion of the remains, to enable them to foretell, according to the order in which the several parts are disposed of, the future state of the soul now escaped from its earthly tenement. Great is the delight of the mourners if they observe that the right eye is consumed before its fellow, as this is the best augury for complete happiness in the next world. This mode of disposal of the dead is, to my mind, a revolting custom, discreditable alike to the enlightened ideas of the Parsees and to the government that permits it. But, owing to the policy we have hitherto pursued in India, never to interfere in any way with the religious observances of the inhabitants, no check has been placed upon the practice. Consequently this filthy and unsanitary method of disposal continues to be employed, not only in Bombay, but in every locality where Parsees are present in any number.

Is Dr. Wakefield aware that, once inside the cemetery gate, the dead body is seen by the surviving relatives no more? It remains in the sole charge of the corpse-bearers, whose business it is to let the fleshless skeleton drop into its last resting-place (a huge well wherein are congregated the bones of many generations) as soon as the vultures have picked it clean. As to the story of the eye, some Bombay "duck" must have been making an irreverent joke at the Doctor's expense. Nor is this mode of burial so very unsanitary as as our author seems to think it. The Parsees themselves believe it to be the most sanitary method of burial in India; and they are right. Those vultures are the best scavengers in the country; they assimilate what might otherwise taint

the air, and they do it with such extraordinary rapidity that in a few hours a couple of them would put themselves outside the biggest dead horse in the land, hoofs and skeleton alone excepted; and at the Towers of Silence they are too numerous not to be able to dispose of a dead body in the space of about twenty minutes. Dr. Wakefield would also seem to be uncertain as to whether the idolatrous and polytheistic Hindoos entertain the idea of a Supreme Being; he considers their habits of religious fasting to be an "anomaly," and he abhors the common practice of suicide under the wheels of Jagganath's car. In the last case his compassion is thrown away, for almost all the deaths are but accidents such as must occur in the crush of the numerous multitudes of fanatics assembled at the yearly festival. The car-festival is Vishnaivite, and suicide, as well as the destruction of any animal life whatever, is an unpardonable sin in the eyes of every worshipper of Vishnu. Dr. Hunter's 'Statistical Account of Bengal' may be consulted for the doctrine of this subject as taught by Caitanya, the apostle of Jagan-Nath (Lord of the World). Nor is fasting as a means of acquiring influence with the gods "anomalous." There is not a religion in the world in which it has not been systematically practised for that very purpose. This, however, is not the place for an explanation of the world-wide fact which Mr. Tyler has expressed in his formula, that "the Zulus have no faith in a fat prophet." As for the first point, the Hindoos are neither more nor less monotheistic than Roman Catholics. Did Dr. Wakefield ever take the trouble to question his own domestic servants on the subject? If so, he would have discovered that his *punkah-coolie* was just as staunch a monotheist as Pope Pius IX. The *punkah-coolie* may call upon Rama, or his wife Sita, or Krishna, to relieve him of his perplexities, just as a Roman Catholic would invoke St. Peter, or St. Nicholas, or the Virgin of Lourdes; but he would invoke Parmesur, Bhugwan, Khoda—all names for the Supreme—to witness his most solemn affirmation. A share of the pity which Dr. Wakefield expends on the idolatrous Brahman might, perhaps, have been spared for some ecclesiastics further West, some of whose religious notions are, as an eminent man of science once remarked, on a level with those of South Sea Islanders. The same inaccuracy of observation is manifest in some of his local sketches. Allahabad cannot boast of "a few fine new streets." There is not a single fine street in the place. In cleanliness and order, and, perhaps, the substantial character of its buildings, the main street excels those of most native towns; but it would miserably disappoint a too expectant stranger. Its effect depends upon its teeming life, the bright costumes of its crowds, and its new bazaar, which is really a credit to the municipality. The English "station," however, is, as Dr. Wakefield says, the finest in Upper India; but it would take too much space to explain to an English reader what a "station" is, and in what sense it may be considered "fine."

But we must hasten to quote the only passage worth notice in all these hundreds of pages of usually correct, but utterly insipid and wholly misplaced prose. It is an account of the fire-alarm drill on board an Indian troopship, and may be found in pp. 32, 33:—

> Immediately the fire-bell rings out the alarm, no matter what time of the day or night, or what occupation is in hand, all rush to their respective posts. The ladies and children are collected in the saloon and locked in, and the wives and families of the soldiers in the forward part of the ship are similarly treated. The engines are stopped, and all ports closed; while the soldiers assemble at the several pumps and hoses, to which they have been appointed under certain officers soon after their arrival on board. These "squads" assist the sailors in keeping up a continuous supply of water. Another party of troops, with fixed bayonets, take possession of the boats to prevent their forcible abduction. They also guard the approaches to the various store-rooms; no one being permitted to pass except the head steward and his assistants, whose business it is to pack up and transport to the boats provisions and necessaries of all kinds. The captain of the ship, with the commanding officer of the troops and his staff, are the only persons allowed on the quarter-deck, from which commanding position they issue the several orders considered necessary. The duty assigned to the medical officers of both services is to proceed at once to their respective hospitals and make arrangements for the removal of the sick and helpless.

Perhaps the most singular division of labour in this case was the investment of the chaplain, the paymaster and the quartermaster, with the duty of "allaying the natural fears of the softer sex," the "sex" being, as already said, locked up in the saloon. One can understand how the chaplain—more especially if he were "high church," and wore a heavy moustache and beard—might prove himself an invaluable consoler in the case of a real, but more particularly in that of a sham fire, but one fails to detect a special aptitude for that sort of work in the ship's paymaster. All the other incidents of the voyage out have been told again and again. The story of how we won Perim has literally been done to death; every powder-monkey on board the *Serapis* must have had it long since at his fingers' ends. And what earthly use is there in telling us for the millionth time where the Suez Canal begins and ends, who dug it, what Palmerston thought of it, how dreary the desert looks on either side of it, and how tedious is the trip through? It is not correct to say that the passage usually takes from thirty-five to forty-eight hours: half the time would be nearer the mark. And the inaccuracy is just of a piece with many others scattered throughout the volume, as where Dr. Wakefield speaks of Warren Hastings and his earlier successors as "Viceroys," though India was never blessed with an English Viceroy until after the Mutiny.

THE MAGAZINES.

There are different ways of writing biographies, and though Mr. Sala, in the "life-memory" of 'George Cruikshank' which he contributes to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, disclaims any intention of writing a biography of the famous caricaturist, and makes the disclaimer good by giving very few dates, telling us neither when he was born nor when he died, saying not a word about his domestic relations, except that he never was a Bohemian and always professed to "keep up appearances," and rambling on as much about himself as about his subject, he yet contrives to give a wonderfully vivid picture of the manner of man George Cruikshank was, and a very clear estimate of his position as an artist. George Cruikshank, Mr. Sala says, was his hero from the time he left the nursery, and he worshipped him in a way which necessitated a very minute acquaintance with his work, making it his chief amusement to copy his caricatures, as they were issued, with pen and ink. He began about 1836 with Cruikshank's illustrations to the 'Sketches by Boz,' and continued his loving imitation through the successive numbers of 'Oliver Twist,' trying his hand at least twenty times on "Fagin in the condemned cell," and "Sikes attempting to destroy his dog." Such discipleship might have unfitted Mr Sala to sit in judgment on his master, but he is just as well as reverential in his estimate of Cruikshank's powers, assigning to him the Hogarthian spirit without attempting to claim for him anything like the whole force of Hogarth's genius. In passing, Mr. Sala makes some admirable remarks on Hogarth, drawing this distinction between him and Cruikshank, that the one was a tragic while the other was a melodramatic artist. The distinction could not be better expressed. If, however, Mr. Sala's reminiscences were confined to criticisms of George Cruikshank's work, they would be comparatively uninteresting, even with the advantages which he possessed of a prolonged and intimate acquaintance with his subject. But they contain many invaluable personal touches as well. We could not wish for a more characteristic trait than the fact, which Mr. Sala's close study of "George's" work enabled him to detect, that, conscientious as he was, he yet was obstinate enough not to resist the temptation of "scamping" his work in the etched copper-plate that he supplied for Bentley after he had quarrelled with him and before his contract was at an end. And Mr. Sala is able to put on record more pleasing traits also. For example, after stating how reticent George was about a certain incident which he had illustrated in 'Jack Shephard,' he goes on to say:—

> And then he shook his good old head in the oracular manner so distinctive of him, and departed, waving his celebrated gingham umbrella (it was not quite as large as Mrs. Gamp's, but it might have belonged to that lady's husband; you remember, the person with the wooden leg, of whose remains Mrs. G. disposed for the benefit of Science?) and looking as though with that humble implement (little David had but a sling and a stone) he could confront the great Goliath of Beer and Gin himself, and slay the giant in full view of a Philistine host of Licensed Victuallers. I never knew a man who made such effective exits as did George Cruikshank; and it is (as all actors know) an extremely difficult thing to quit the stage with *éclat*. When

George left you with a flourish of the umbrella, or a snapping of the fingers (or sometimes with a few steps of a hornpipe or the Highland fling), he never failed to extort from you a round of mental applause, and you felt yourself saying, watching his rapidly departing form (for he was as active at eighty-one, ay, and at eighty-five, as a County Court bailiff), "God bless the dear old boy! how well he looks, and what spirits he has."

Towards the close of the article there occurs a still more pleasing reminiscence. Mr. Sala recounts how, when in early life he thought of earning his livelihood as an artist, he carried introductions without success to various influential persons and finally betook himself to George Cruikshank:—

And then I went—in a somewhat dejected mood, I must admit—to George Cruikshank, who lived at the time in Amwell Street, Pentonville Hill. He must then have been about fifty years of age, and, his short stature excepted, was a strikingly handsome man. I can see him now, in a shawl-pattern dressing gown, and with the little spaniel which he has introduced in the meerschaum-smoking reverie in the "Table Book" basking on the hearth-rug. He received me with great kindness, and kept me with him more than two hours minutely examining my drawings, pointing out their defects, showing (with a little curved gold pencil) how the faults might be remedied, but giving me words of bright comfort and hope. I went away trembling all over with surprise, and gratitude, and joy; but I was yet lingering on the doorstep, when he opened the door and called me back into the passage. These were his "more last words." "It's a very precarious profession," quoth he, "and if you mean to do anything you'll have to work much harder than ever the coalheavers do down Durham Yard."

The author of the 'Political Adventures of Lord Beaconsfield' in the *Fortnightly Review* has brought to light some new illustrations of his lordship's motto. We have not before seen it remarked that in one of the later editions of 'Lothair' Lord Beaconsfield affirms that he wrote nothing between 1832 and 1837. He probably meant by "nothing" nothing of consequence, thereby testifying his own mature opinion of 'The Revolutionary Epick,' 'Alroy,' and 'The Adventures of Captain Popanilla.' We all know why Lord Beaconsfield should not be anxious to remember the Revolutionary Epick, but the writer in the *Fortnightly* is the first, so far as we know, to suggest why he should also be willing to forget Popanilla. Besides the circumstance that this work contains a satire on the Sovereign, the landed aristocracy, and the Cabinet, one of the facts recorded in it is, the reviewer points out, an arrangement made by the aboriginal inhabitant for forcing his own agricultural produce on the inhabitants of Vraibleusia, an obvious satire on the doctrine of Protection, of which Lord Beaconsfield was afterwards so distinguished a champion. This second instalment of the adventures of Lord Beaconsfield is weightier in tone and more severe in spirit than the first. After summing up, in language which is uniformly severe and occasionally scathing, the political career of his lordship from 1832 to 1837, the writer proceeds to explain as follows his reasons for examining a statesman's past history with such severity during his lifetime:—

In writing this sketch we lay our account with some censure, which we have no choice but to confront. The public career of Lord Beaconsfield is in our view the opprobrium of English politics during the past forty years, and his political character is, in the situation which he holds, a danger and defiance to England, and a threat to the peace of the world. There can be no reason why, without exaggeration, but without reserve, we should not say what we believe to be the truth about it. In discussing the actions of a politician from day to day it is neither desirable nor possible to be always examining character. Life is too short for business of that sort. The man must be taken for granted, in the position to which he has raised himself, and in which the public sees him with acquiescence, and even maintains him with deliberate purpose. But this abeyance, for convenience sake, of the moral judgment—this refusal to raise the previous question of general character and motives at every step in social intercourse or every stage of the public business—certainly does not involve the permanent renunciation of moral judgment. It is impossible to leave men to the appreciation of history only. To treat Lord Beaconsfield as if he were a Chatham would simply be ludicrous twenty-five years hence. No one will grudge any paradox-monger of the twentieth century an amusement of that sort if he can find nothing better or more plausible. But what will be historic folly then is a very present danger now, a danger against which it is impossible to guard without what is called attacking an individual. We speak only of Lord Beaconsfield's public character. His admirer shave not even the least right to protest against personality in politics. The life of their hero has been little more than a series of personal assaults.

* * * * * *

The premature death of the Prince Consort, the withdrawal of the Queen for a long term of years from active interest in political affairs, and the long Premierships of Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone, men very dissimilar in most respects, but neither of them courtiers, nor possessing the qualities likely to make them the favourites of court favourites—men of great natural vigour of character, of strong purpose, and of resolute political convictions—all these things have contributed to keep in check for a time the assumptions which Baron Stockmar encouraged. Under Lord Beaconsfield's administration they have revived, and revived in a more mischievous form and under worse guidance than ever before. They are ostentatiously set forth in courtier-like Memoirs appearing under the royal sanction, and in political manifestos of important Conservative organs. They fit in with the doctrines which Lord Beaconsfield has professed with more steadiness than any other of his fluctuating opinions, and which he probably seriously entertains. They are likely enough to receive very mischievous development at his hands—a development in which there may be the seeds of future troubles, unless a more modest view of the functions of the Crown in the Constitution than that which he encourages be adopted and acted upon in future. The personal power of the monarch is in danger of becoming either a means of thwarting a minister who has the confidence of the country without the goodwill of the sovereign; or, what might be yet more calamitous, the personal power of an adroit flatterer and a daring adventurer is likely, under forms of obsequious submission, to take the place of the personal power of the monarch. Cardinal Wolsey wrote, *Ego et rex meus*. Lord Beaconsfield makes a very near approach sometimes to a similar egotism. It is no longer possible to treat him with the half-contemptuous indulgence that was thought to be due to a political comedian. Up till 1874 Mr. Disraeli was treated by the whole political press of England as a joke, although he was often treated—and especially in the *Quarterly Review*—as a very misplaced and untimely joke. In 1878, without being a serious personage, he holds very serious issues in his hands. It is essential that men should be reminded what manner of man he is to whom the English people, the English Parliament, and the Queen of England, have committed a sort of political dictatorship.

Some interesting particulars about an early incident in Lord Beaconsfield's career, his brief connexion with the Westminster Club, the basis of which was Radical, are given in an article by Mr. W. Fraser Rae on "Political Clubs." in the *Nineteenth Century*. If Mr. Rae had consulted Mr. O'Connor's biography of Lord Beaconsfield he might have made his account more complete, but as it is he supplies a curious reminder of the Conservative Premier's preliminary coquetting with Radicalism. It is Mr. Rae's opinion that Lord Beaconsfield "began life as he will doubtless end it—a sentimental Radical at heart." The writer in the *Fortnightly* to whom we have alluded takes a different view. Mr. Rae's paper embodies the results of a long acquaintance with party clubs, tracing their achievements from Swift's "Society of Brothers," founded during Harley and Bolingbroke's Administration in the reign of Queen Anne, "who numbered sixteen, dined together at short intervals, discussed business over their wine, and effected nothing worthy of commemoration," down to the recently established Liberal Association of Birmingham. Mr. Rae finds the prototype of this and other associations on the same model which have been established in other towns of the kingdom in the "Nominating Conventions" of the United States, and he prophesies little good from the institution, endeavouring, not quite conclusively, to show that it must result as it did in America, in "the creation of a new avocation, that of the politician, one which honest men despise and contemn." Even supposing that the machinery is the same in the two countries, it is a rash inference that similar forms will lead to the same results in different circumstances. We are not sure that Mr. Rae is speaking with an intimate knowledge of the perfection of the Conservative organisation in 1874, and the imperfection of the Liberal organisation at the same period, when he makes the following remarks, but they are sufficiently striking to be worth consideration:—

The Liberal rout of 1874 was due, not so much to the defection of the regular members of the party as to the alienation of the vast and fluctuating body of electors that moves as public opinion directs. I need not discuss why it was that public opinion then veered in a particular direction; but it is certain that the many and splendid triumphs of Mr. Gladstone's Administration had as great a share and as direct an influence on the result as its grievous blunders. What has been overlooked is the part now played by the floating mass composed of electors who, having no settled convictions, are easily roused to frenzy for or against a particular course, are ready at one time to declare that the Government has gone too far, and at another that it must be made to move on. This mass is impressionable as wax and unstable as water. When Liberals or Conservatives succeed in "organizing" it, they will have learned the art of making ropes out of sand.

Those who insist on the importance of organisation would probably say that this "vast fluctuating body of electors" are precisely the class on whom superior organisation tells.

ART.

ROYAL ACADEMY.

[*First Notice.*]

It would perhaps be unfair to say that this is a bad exhibition because the first impression of it is bad. That there are many good works somewhere on the walls if the eye could only reach them is possible enough, but that there is an overpowering quantity of bad work in places of honour and dis-

tinction no one who has visited the gallery will be disposed to deny. Even the Academicians, we are told, have learned to laugh over a certain picture contributed by one of their body, and to those whose withers are unwrung there is undoubtedly good material for amusement. But for this year, at least, the majority of the "forty" must not laugh too loudly. With very few exceptions they have, indeed, very little right to laugh at all, and we should fancy that even the gayest heart amongst them must be sobered by a careful survey of the great gallery that is so richly decorated with the gems of their own fashioning. Truly, the general appearance of this room can, to use Mr. Carlyle's expression, "be exhilarating to no mortal" except, perhaps, to one whose work has been rejected altogether, and who may possibly be cheered by the sight of what his judges present to him as models of imitation. He may learn from Mr. Frith how to treat a subject of genre in such a manner as to suggest what Hogarth might have been if he had never known how to paint. With Mr. Armitage he will rise into the pure region of religious art, to note how the qualities of greatness in style may be reconciled with the claims of nature, while under the true guidance of Mr. Cope he will be taught how a theme of our own time may be made to yield a scheme of sober, just, and harmonious colour. Truly, we can fancy that, while all the rest of the Academic body had trooped off to an adjoining room to enjoy the drolleries of Mr. Hart, the latter gentleman might have been left to laugh alone over the splendid ambitions of the great gallery.

But we shall, perhaps, return to some of the pictures on the line in order to devote a careful consideration to their merits, and in the meantime it will be a pleasanter task to occupy ourselves with works that prove the presence of greater vitality even within the academic ranks. There is no very important example this year of the kind of art that depends upon the exercise of strong imagination. Mr. Watts, although his illustration from Spenser has many admirable qualities, is not at his best; Mr. Leighton, though he never forgets the claims of beauty, fails sometimes, and now more than ever, to convince us that the grace he loves to depict has been won directly from nature. In such pictures as "Winding the Skein" (302) and "Nausicaa" (145) the elegant lines of the composition want the energy of life, and the colour, though always harmonious, is too far translated from the freshness and distinctness of reality. We have to turn this year for more satisfying artistic results to a department of painting that is every year amply represented, and in which as usual there are to be found many deplorable failures. Against these failures, however, it is pleasant to be able to set so complete and distinguished a performance as the "Première Communion" (506) by Mr. P. R. Morris. We say complete, for although the execution leaves something to desire in the way of perfect finish, the picture has the higher completeness of intention and design. The subject is taken frankly from the life of our time, and in the treatment of it the painter has done no violence to realistic truth. The scene has taken hold of him in such a way as to leave a strong impression of its beauty, and all the details of the scene have been chosen and controlled to satisfy this impression. The fluttering white garment of the young girls who advance in procession, singing as they go; the green rushes at their feet, relieved here with sprigs of lilac bloom; the blue blouses of the peasants who stand to watch the show; the strip of greenish water and the sky above it—all these elements fall without effort into an agreeable scheme of colour that by its beauty and simplicity vindicates the painter's choice of material and asserts the fidelity of his method. There is no anxious seeking after sentiment, no desire to force the facts into the service of any pathetic story invented for the sake of beguiling a popular taste. In the facts themselves Mr. Morris has found beauty enough to occupy a painter's thought and to absorb his energies, and yet, in spite of the restraint that he has put upon himself, there is more of true character and humanity in the result that in many a picture that boasts of a stronger hold over the emotions. The heads of the aged peasants are painted with a simplicity and force in every sense admirable. Their patient faces make no appeal to the spectator; they have no painful incidents of domestic trouble to expound or to enforce, but they have the more potent influence that belongs to the serious and thorough rendering of national type and of individual character underlying it. We may observe, too, that this quality of good taste which has impelled Mr. Morris to rest content with the essential beauty of his subject without torturing it into a didactic essay is carried into every separate portion of the picture. All the accessories and details of the composition are disposed with that sense of style which is the sign of true artistic faculty. The presence of the great ship lying in the harbour gives an air of dignity and nobility to the design, and the vessels in the further distance passing out to the sea seem to record the life of the seafaring town and to reflect its daily history. Of the manner in which Mr. Morris has solved the purely technical problems of his work no description can give a just idea. The entire scheme of the colouring is governed by the mass of white drapery that occupies the centre of the canvass, and these fair tones are sustained on every side by delicate tints of blue and green and by the white clouds that hang motionless in the sky. Altogether this picture offers a model of style to those of our painters who insist upon the duty of rendering the life of their time, and in order to realize what is its special distinction we have only to turn our attention for a moment to the contribution entitled "Newgate" (423) by Mr. Frank Holl. Here is to be found the latest expression of a traditional style of the English school, a style that believes in the forced and emphatic utterance of emotion, and is comparatively careless about the qualities of the painting. Mr. Holl has, no doubt, deeply felt the touching interest of his subject; and there is undeniably material for serious reflection not only in Newgate but elsewhere. He has not, however, succeeded in convincing us of its pictorial qualities. He may, perhaps, wring a few tears from the susceptible, but he will not surely charm the eyes of any; and, unless a painter can satisfy the eyes with beauty, we know of no reason why he should be a painter at all, or why he should not rather relate his story in another way. This is a text that might be illustrated by reference to a number of other works that are dignified with the title of "strong realistic pictures." In too many instances, though they may be very strong, they are not pictures at all, and the force of the sentiment that is in them only serves, where it serves any purpose at all, to blind our eyes to the failure of the artist.

From an example of realistic painting that goes far to redeem the dulness of the Exhibition we pass to a portrait that in respect of certain technical qualities may be regarded as perhaps the most remarkable picture of the year. This is the portrait of Mr. Whitehead (204), by Mr. Pettie. That Mr. Pettie is an artist of exceptional power has long been recognised, and that his works even of the same period offer the strangest inequality of merit is proved by several other contributions to the present exhibition. In his pictures of a lady in a crimson silk dress tripping down stairs and holding a domino in her hand, the too obvious cleverness of the painting makes but poor atonement for its coarseness, and in the two heads hung in the second gallery the strength of the execution takes a form that borders on caricature. But in this portrait of Mr. Whitehead his exceptional powers of hand have been fortunately controlled, and the result is a performance that would do no discredit to the best times of Flemish art. In the painting of the face with its fair beard and hair, as well as in the dark velvet costume that serves to set off the blonde complexion, the effect of light and colour is exquisitely blended. The whole picture glows with a diffused warmth of tone that brings into perfect agreement the hues of the flesh and of the drapery, while if we pass from colour to design nothing could well be more masterly than the drawing of the features and of the hands. These are the two pictures that have left the strongest impression on our minds after a first visit to the Academy. The beautiful Mrs. Langtrey, as she is translated into the art of Millais and of Poynter, seems not so beautiful as this by no means handsome gentleman, as he appears on Mr. Pettie's canvas. In this way art seems sometimes to play strange tricks with nature, and to endow her with quite new shape and hue. Even the humblest things, as by some alchemy of genius are

at times transformed into pure gold, and things again of perfect mould may perchance lose their charm as they reappear in the realm of art. Perhaps the Young Princes looked better in the Tower than they do in Mr. Millais' picture.

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

[*First Notice.*]

It was sometimes said of the Grosvenor Gallery, when it was opened last year, that its *raison d'être* was to provide an exhibition room for the works of painters who either could not or would not get them exhibited elsewhere, a school of superior persons who thought too highly of their productions to let them appear on the same walls with those of the common herd. The only ground which the impartial observer could see for this reproach was that a whole side of one of the rooms of the Gallery was filled with the pictures of Mr. Burne Jones, who had for several years ceased to exhibit at Burlington House, while a large space in another side was allotted to Mr. James Whistler, who was also so dissatisfied with the conditions of the Academy Exhibition as to decline to take part in it. These painters diverge so markedly in their respective paths from the highway of their time that their pictures excited more comment than any others in the Grosvenor Gallery Exhibition, and, though there were plenty of other notable works in the Gallery, it was naturally supposed, as they could not be seen elsewhere, that it had been expressly built for them. This is a supposition that would not readily occur to those who visit the present Exhibition. Mr. Burne Jones and Mr. Whistler are still well represented, but, apart from the fact that the novelty of their styles has been somewhat worn off by last year's exhibition, they are not so preponderatingly the "features" of the exhibition as they were before. If this year's exhibition has any special feature beyond being a representative collection of all existing schools of English, as well as some of Foreign art, where all our painters of mark, with the exception of Mr. Petty and perhaps one or two more, can be seen at their best, it may be said to lie in the amount of space conceded to our younger painters, Mr. Cecil Lawson, Mr. Gregory, Mr. John Collier, Mr. Herkomer, Mr. Macbeth, Mrs. Jopling, Mr. Frank Dicey, Mr. Pellegrini, and the prominence assumed by the works that they exhibit. But, indeed, the catholicity of the present collection is its most remarkable feature. The visitor who cannot find many things to his sympathy must indeed be hard to please. If he refuses to be moved by the imaginative force of Mr. Burne Jones, and can see in that artist's pallid-faced and bright-robed figures only the signs of sickly decay and effeminate luxury, he may refresh himself by turning to P. R. Morris's vigorous picture of an English Michaelmas, where a damsel, in the full enjoyment of robust exercise and ruddy health, is seen driving a flock of most tempting geese along a rough road, with green fields on each side and elm trees waving over her, or to Mr. Boughton's more idyllic picture of two rustic rivals, wielding huge sledge hammers in some quarrying operation, and striving to commend themselves by their prowess to a peach-cheeked girl who is watching the competition. If he thinks himself insulted by being invited to consider Mr. Whistler's dim and shadowy "arrangements" as pictorial works of art, he has only to turn his eye to the left and he will find abundance of broad daylight brightness and breeziness on the canvas of M. Heilbuth, or he may cross the room and feel as if he were taking a holiday in the country by placing himself in front of Mr. Macbeth's picture of farmers, labourers, and their flocks bustling home from the fair of St. Ives. If Mr. Leighton's "Study" is too decorative and superficial to give him pleasure, he will find a whole panel filled with the works of Mr. Alma Tadema unsurpassed for depth and solidity. If the ideal grace and loveliness of Mr. Albert Moore's female figures seem to him to be too ethereal for this world, he may seek out Mr. Millais' miracles of English womanhood, who, as is well said in *The Times*, "look as if they had been brought up in the air of the woods and moors, and could at need mark down a buck or wind a mort or draw a cloth-yard shaft in a way to satisfy Robin Hood himself." If he has no interest in prettiness, and therefore passes by Mr. Richmond's portraits of Master and Miss Campbell, he must pause with satisfaction before the powerful rendering of a manly face and figure in Mr. Gregory's portrait of Mr. Eley. And so on, and so on. All our schools of art are impartially represented in the exhibition; the selector's only predilection seems to have been for having good examples of each.

The praise awarded to Mr. Cecil Lawson's landscapes, which occupy prominent places in the gallery, is a striking illustration of the advantage of having in London a supplementary place of exhibition to Burlington House, where pictures can be hung in such a way as fully to display their merits and where the best space is not appropriated by privileged exhibitors. Mr. Lawson's career is what Bacon called a finger-post instance. Three years ago one of his landscapes, "The Hop Gardens of England," was rejected by the Hanging Committee of the Academy. Shortly afterwards it was exhibited at Mr. Maclean's gallery in the Haymarket, and was much admired by those who saw it there, but it was seen by comparatively few, so that Mr. Lawson remained unknown to fame. He fared no better next year, when this same picture was at the second time of asking accepted and hung by the Academicians, because it was placed high above a violently-coloured picture, the work of one of their number, and both its position on the wall and its surroundings were unfavourable to the appreciation of tender colour and delicate elaboration of details. Mr. Lawson still went without his reward. But now, though he has not changed his method since he painted the Hop Gardens, though he still aims at dreamy outlines and the suffusion of the hard facts of nature with tender sentiment, and has made no very marked advance in technical craft, in point either of composition or of harmonising skill, no sooner is his work placed where it can be properly viewed than the critics come forward unanimously to assign him a high rank among our landscape-painters. A distinctive place he has undoubtedly taken as one of the first to attempt on a large scale the reconciliation of the realistic with the poetic treatment of nature. In the "Minister's Garden," for example, there is no want of painstaking fidelity to nature in the sturdy fir-tree, the roses, the hollyhocks, and the beehives in the foreground, nor in the meadows, swelling uplands and distant hills towards which we look from the garden which gives its title to the picture, but at the same time the artist has thrown such a tender and peaceful sentiment into his work, harmonising the bright colours of the foreground, and choosing a moment of subdued light for the wide expanse of landscape, that he has fully justified himself in describing it as "a tribute to the memory of Oliver Goldsmith." It is just such a garden as fancy would choose for the Vicar of Wakefield to sit in, with his younger children playing around him, while his good lady was busy within making her famous gooseberry wine. There is the same patient truth to nature combined with the same preference for its tender aspects in Mr. Lawson's smaller picture, which he entitles "Strayed—A Moonlight Pastoral," an exquisite piece of painting, in which he attains his purpose with still more indubitable certainty than in the larger work. We do not know whether Mr. Lawson had any allegoric intention in this picture, but the lamb which has strayed from the fold where its companions are lying in the foreground, and seems to be bleating piteously over a river laden with steamers and barges, beyond which we can discern in the dim moonlight the forms of warehouses and factory chimneys, admits easily of an allegoric interpretation. But apart from any allegoric suggestion, the picture is a delightful work of art, the effects of light and shade being managed with a firmness and boldness which may without exaggeration be said to remind one of Rembrandt.

MUSIC.

MLLE. MINNIE HAUK.

The Italian opera season is dragging on its wearisome existence in the old familiar way. With the exception of

Mlle. Albani, who made her first appearance at Covent Garden last Tuesday, the "stars" have not yet risen in our hemisphere, and the various novelties promised at both houses are as yet—where several of them will, perhaps, be destined to remain—in the future. The dulness of atmosphere which generally overhangs the first six weeks of the operatic season was at last broken by the arrival at Her Majesty's of Mlle. Minnie Hauk. The lady is no stranger to our shores. Ten years ago, in her artistic infancy, she paid a short visit to London, and sang Amina in the "Sonnambula" with much success. Ten years are a long epoch in the life of a singer, and we need hardly say that Mlle. Hauk is much changed since she was seen here last; but the change is all for the better. The novice has grown into the developed artist, her voice has gained in beauty and power, and her acting shows greater maturity of intellect. Her reception on Saturday last was accordingly most favourable, all the more auspiciously so as at her first entrance no hand was moved to welcome her. The lady evidently had become a stranger to the public. But after the first few notes every one became aware of the presence of an artist of no mean order. Mlle. Hauk's *début* was accompanied by several by no means favourable circumstances; for one of these she was herself, at least partly responsible. The part of the frail heroine in Verdi's "Traviata" cannot be called an altogether sympathetic one; and its resources, moreover, have been exhausted by some of the greatest singers now on the Italian boards. To produce a new and a startling effect in it requires a nature peculiarly adapted to the idiosyncracies of the character; it also requires an external appearance compatible with the ideas of feverish life and lingering death. Mlle. Hauk, we are glad to say, has neither the one nor the other. Her talent is of a healthy kind, and her appearance is youth and bloom itself; even, under such conditions a competent actress will never spoil a part, but neither is she likely to produce that thrilling effect which at once places her on the pinnacle of popularity. Another and graver calamity was the fair Traviata's sentimental partner. Most tenors are apt to be a trifle flat occasionally, but when, as in Signor Runcio's case, that flatness continues through entire scenes, and amounts to something like a quarter of a tone, even the most guileless amateur begins to suspect that something must be wrong somewhere, and the chances are ten to one that the blame will be laid on the singers conjointly. If any further proof of the detrimental effects of the "star" system were required, such an exhibition as that just alluded to would furnish it. At no theatre with any pretence to *ensemble* could such flagrant violations of the laws of sound have been tolerated. Unfortunately, our public is proverbially indulgent, and Italians venture to do at Her Majesty's what, at a second-rate theatre of their own country, would be resented in a very unmistakeable, and therefore, very efficacious manner.

To return to Mlle. Hauk, we notice the faultless purity of her intonation, and in connection with it the easy and brilliant flow of her bravura passages, also the considerable compass of her voice, which produces high soprano notes with perfect ease, and is at the same time remarkable for the power and sweetness of its middle and lower register. The opening part of the famous "Ah fors' è lui" seemed to suffer somewhat from an exaggerated *rintenuto;* but the ensuing allegro "Sempre libra" was bright and joyous, and fully deserved the storm of applause it elicited. The more soul-stirring qualities of her voice were shown in the two duets of the second act, and her delicate, and at the same time thoroughly dramatic treatment of the death scene, which closes the opera, proved Mlle. Hauk to be an actress of high accomplishment. Of her further achievements in parts more congenial to her, we shall speak on an early occasion. In the meantime we may say that the acquisition of the American *prima donna* may be hoped to atone, at least to some extent, for the loss of the Swedish nightingale.

SECOND CONCERT OF THE BACH CHOIR.

The second public performance of this excellent society was, if possible, even more interesting and more successful than the first. The chorus again evinced signs of the most careful training, and the quality of tone attained, for instance, in the *finale* of Bach's Magnificat has seldom, if ever, been rivalled in London. The honour of an *encore*, rarely accorded to a choral piece, was fully deserved in this instance. Of Bach's marvellous work, to which the orchestral accompaniments of Robert Franz gave additionel brightness and splendour, we cannot speak in detail. It is, perhaps, less deep and less intense, than the Passion according to St. Matthew, and less sweetly sympathetic than the "Christmas Oratorio;" but the feeling of religious and festive elevation is throughout sustained in a most marvellous manner. A short selection did not sufficiently represent at these concerts so great a work as Palestrina's Mass, called after the Pope to whom it was dedicated, "Missa Papæ Marcelli." Palestrina stands at the opening of the modern epoch of music, and this particular work is said to have secured the continuance of the musical services in the Catholic churches at that time (1565) a question of vital importance to the art. We trust the Bach Choir will take an early opportunity of producing the entire Mass. Most welcome were two specimens of English music, Purcell's anthem, "O God, thou hast cast us out," and Wilby's Madrigal, "Draw on sweet night," both admirably rendered. Schumann's "New Year's Song," repeated by desire, and Mendelssohn's "Walpurgisnacht," completed the interesting programme. Mr. Otto Goldschmidt again acted as conductor; the soloists were Mme. Lemmens Sherrington, Mme. Redeker, Mr. Shakespeare and Herr Henschel.

DRAMA.

ROYALTY THEATRE—NELL GWYNNE.

In this play Mr. Wills shows hardly less ingenuity in devising dramatic situations than he does in "Olivia;" but the situations, though equally effective in themselves, do not hang so closely together. There is not sufficient intensity of plot. The action is in the main a contest of wits between the King's mistress and the King's favourite, and the combat fails to interest because, unless we take so vivid a delight in history that we can place ourselves at a given date in the seventeenth century and forget that we know anything about what happened afterwards, it is impossible to be excited about the issue. If the antagonists were, for example, the Earl of Beaconsfield and a fascinating Russian spy, such as the Countess Zicka, the case might be different. But granting that Buckingham did enter into plots with the Puritans, and that his designs were discovered and exposed by Nell Gwynne, a fiction which the dramatist may readily be permitted to use, we know too well beforehand that nothing came of Buckingham's plots to be under any lively apprehension lest they should succeed. Even in the historical drama, when the dramatist does his utmost to put us perforce in a past situation, showing plotters and counter plotters at work with such intensity that we enter into the spirit of it in spite of ourselves, this foreknowledge of the result, combined with the sense of unreality caused by a recollection of which we cannot wholly divest ourselves that the facts were not quite as they are represented on the stage, is a considerable drawback. In a comedy it can hardly be otherwise than fatal to make the interest turn upon a political intrigue, because the dramatist is prohibited by the laws of that species of composition from giving it a sufficiently deep and serious aspect. In this play Mr. Wills, who has already dealt more than once with the character of Buckingham, does not present him as a sufficiently formidable conspirator to make us rejoice at the end that witty Mistress Gwynne has foiled him, and yet this is the only satisfaction with which the fall of the curtain leaves us. The lover, who in all well-regulated comedies is made happy after many trials and struggles, is here left out in the cold. His mistress loves her country better than him, and does not hesitate to trade upon his affection and deceive him for her country's good, constraining him by the love which he bears her to be false to his employer's trust and to become her instrument in baffling unpatriotic designs, but

dismissing him with very little effort when her purpose is served. This may be highly commendable behaviour in real life, but it is a shock to our sense of what is right on the stage.

But, indeed, Mr. Wills's "Nell Gwynne" is not so much a comedy as a dramatic biography, a series of scenes designed to illustrate his conception of a character. The first act shows us how cleverly "witty, pretty Mistress Nelly" held her own in the Court, charming the King with her sprightly airs and the ready mother wit of her repartees to a jealous rival, the Duchess of Portsmouth. In the second act she appears as the vigilant patriot, chance having thrown in her way a bundle of letters belonging to the Duke of Buckingham which she suspects to be treasonable but cannot read because they are in cipher. It is seen also that she is in some danger of being outmanœuvred, for Buckingham has in his possession certain love-letters of hers to a young actor, George Selwyn—the only non-historical name in the play—whom she had promised to marry. Neither antagonist is aware of the advantage possessed by the other, but they challenge each other gaily to a trial of strength. Buckingham contrives an interview between Nelly and her old lover, George Selwyn, and so arranges that the King shall be witness to tender passages between them; then, handing the parcel of love-letters to the King, triumphs in the belief that he has destroyed her influence for ever. But she has been too sharp for him. When the parcel is opened by the King it is found to contain, not Nelly's love-letters, but indisputable proofs of Buckingham's treasonable practices. In order to effect this manœuvre, the clever lady has been obliged to promise to George Selwyn, who is Buckingham's private secretary, that she will fulfil her previous promise of marriage, and the last act consists of a dramatic explanation of the reason why, having attained her object, she did not fulfil this condition. It is partly that she likes the splendour of the Court, partly that she is moved by the King's despair at the idea of parting with her, but chiefly because she sees that by keeping her influential position she will have many opportunities of benefiting her country. She therefore decides to throw George Selwyn over, and remain with the King, and the first use which she makes of her new lease of ascendancy is to procure the remission of an obnoxious tax. The play ends with the King's consent to abolish this tax, the heroine on her knees thanking him in the name of the country. As a dramatic illustration of a character nothing could be more ingenious. In order to produce his charming picture of Nell Gwynne, Mr. Wills has been obliged to take considerable liberties with history, but none of them are sufficiently serious to be objectionable.

VARIORUM NOTES.

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At the annual *converzatione* of the Royal Society on Wednesday last there was a more than ordinarily interesting display of the recent triumphs of science. The latest improvements on the telephone naturally attracted more attention than any other wonder, but not a little interest was shown in the results of Mr. Galton's curious experiments in combining photographs of different criminals so as to arrive at the typical villain. The composite portrait retains what is common to all the negatives used in the process. One would naturally expect either that it would be blurred, or that the last negative used would leave a stronger impress than the others; but, strange to say, a tolerably clear portrait is the result. Mr. Galton exhibited these composite villains along with the separate photographs from which they were put together.

It is a curious thing that purism of diction should so often be conjoined with weakness of syntax. One of our "purest" writers is Addison, and it may safely be said that there is no English writer of equal eminence whose grammar is so often at fault. We have before us another illustration of this paradox in a lithographed letter by Mr. W. C. Bryant, recently published in the *National Banker* of New York, on the taxation of national banks. Mr. Bryant is zealous for the preservation of the purity of the English language, as was shown not long ago by the publication of the *Index Expurgatorius* of words and phrases which he had drawn up for the use of the writers in the newspaper of which he is the editor. It is a surprise, therefore, to find such a sentence as the following in his appeal against the Bank tax:—"I have long," he says, "been of the opinion that this practice was inequitable in its operation, but now, in the present state of the money market I am convinced that a regard to our national prosperity and to the demands of justice require, that the banks should be relieved of a burden which, if they continue to bear, may lead to throwing up their charters on the part of many of them, to the great disadvantage of the commerce of the country." Here we have a singular noun with a plural verb, and a pronoun which has to be construed in the nominative to one verb and in the objective to another, curious mistakes for a man who has been writing all his life and is excessively particular about his language.

A good story is told in the *Leeds Mercury* relating to a meeting between the Chinese Minister, who is himself a poet, and Mr. Robert Browning. "After the mutual courtesies, Mr. Browning having learnt that his Excellency was also a poet expressed a desire to know how much he had published. 'Only two or three volumes' was the reply through the interpreter 'Then,' said Mr. Browning, 'I am a greater offender than his Excellency and unequal to him in self-restraint. What kind of poetry does his Excellency write—pastoral, humorous, epic, or what?' There was a pause for a short time. At length the interpreter said that his Excellency thought the poetry would be better described as 'enigmatic.' 'Surely,' replied Mr. Browning, 'there ought, then, to be the deepest sympathy between us, for that is just the criticism which is brought against my own works, and I believe it to be a just one.'"

Visitors to Paris soon become aware that the "cochers," to whom they have so frequently to entrust themselves, are leagued together in a manner almost rivalling for completeness a secret society of the middle ages or a Ribbon organisation of to-day. The chief committee of this association is said to have just issued instructions to all the members of the society to be on their best behaviour during the Exhibition, and it is even said that many of the body receive daily tuition in etiquette and politeness, in order that the Parisian Jehus may not be put to the blush in the presence of so many strangers. If this really be the case many who go over for the Exposition will not recognise the familiar, often too familiar driver of ancient days.

There is a Mass of Mozart's which closely resembles in its opening the commencement of the most popular war song of the moment. The other evening at an æsthetic tea a young high Church musician had begun to favour the company with this performance, and was not a little disgusted at being interrupted by the exclamation of an unsympathetic friend, "By Jove, I did'nt know you played that."

An "Olivia" enthusiast was descanting the other day upon the delightful singing of Mr. Sullivan's "Pastoral" in the second act, and expressing his admiration of the excellent voices of all concerned. His enthusiasm was a little damped, however, when he was informed that the singing was all done behind the scenes by trained singers, with the aid of a sounding-board, while Mrs. Primrose, Sophia, and Mr. Burchell express themselves in dumb show.

Mr. Dutton Cook, in his book on acting, tells an amusing story of a Parisian theatre-goer who objected to a supper scene at one of the theatres because through his opera glass he could observe that the labels on the bottles showed the wine to be not of the first quality. Hypercriticism of this kind is hardly fair to apply to the Court Theatre when everything is so perfectly arranged, but a powerful opera glass has revealed the fact that the so-called 'Horace' of Moses Primrose is in reality a 'Terence!'

It would be interesting to know the origin of the new fashion

of carrying black canes at the opera. Not so much carrying them as leaning heavily upon them and hobbling with the gait of a very aged father in a play seems to be the correct mode. That most painful of fashions, the Alexandra limp, had an obvious origin, but this is more obscure. Some attribute it to the Lord Chief Justice, who was lame last year, and frequently appeared at the opera with the support of a staff. Others say that the great original is the truncheon with which Mr. Bradlaugh and his followers were armed in the recent Hyde Park demonstrations, and that the fashion has some mysterious connexion with Jingoism. But both explanations may be wrong.

Mr. J. Comyns Carr has ceased to write art criticisms for the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Mr. Tom Taylor's next production will be a dramatization of a story from Crabbe. Mr. Paul Meritt will collaborate with him in the work, which will probably succeed "Jealousy" at the Olympic.

When the cast of "Diplomacy" is altered, Mr. H. B. Conway will take Mr. Kendal's part, and Mr. Forbes Robertson that of Mr. Bancroft. Mrs. Bancroft's part will probably be sustained by Miss Sophie Young, and Mrs. Kendal's by Miss Amy Roselle.

The success of Emile Augier's "Fourchambault" increases daily, and the number of places that are taken in advance would fairly rival the receipts for "Diplomacy." "L'Africaine," at the height of its triumph, was not received with greater enthusiasm, which is saying a good deal.

M. Catulle Mendès, the leader of the *Parnasse Contemporain*, has dramatised Theophile Gautier's "Capitaine Fracasse" as a comic opera, in collaboration with M. Pessard, author of the "Cruche Cassée." The rehearsals have begun at the Théatre-Lyrique.

Messrs. C. Kegan Paul and Co. will shortly publish a work on Paris life and character, entitled 'Paris Originals,' by Mr. A. Egmont Hake, illustrated with a large number of copper-plate etchings by Mr. Léon Richeton.

The publishing house of J. Baur, at Paris, has just published a very interesting work, the 'Correspondance de Mme. de Pompadour,' edited by A. P. Malassis. St. Beuve's regret, uttered in 1850, that there were so few authentic letters of Mme. de Pompadour in existence, is partly answered by this collection of ninety letters written, some to her father, M. Poisson, some to her brother, M. de Vandières, some to the Duc d'Aiguillon, and other friends. The book, which is handsomely brought out and illustrated with two portraits of Mme. de Pompadour, from paintings by Vanloo, is a valuable contribution to the literature of eighteenth century history. It is dedicated to Mr. Alfred Morrison, the possessor of the originals of a large number of the letters.

The Messrs. Perrin Brothers, of the Old Bailey, have published a very handy little 'Pocket Guide to the Paris Exhibition,' with maps of Paris, and information as to train and boat services, hotels, theatres, restaurants, and other such matters.

Messrs. Marcus Ward and Co. have in the press, and will publish shortly, a new guide to Killarney and Glengariff, from the joint pens of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall.

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SUMMARY OF PATIENTS TREATED IN 1877.

IN-PATIENTS ADMITTED.

Free Cases	Accidents	2,612	
	Urgent extra cases	2,449	—5,061
Governors' recommended cases			—1,764
In-Patients admitted during 1877			6,825
Largest number at one time in the Wards			721

1,107 Children were among the Patients admitted.

NOTE.—The Wards are always open, and those interested in Hospital work are invited to inspect them.

OUT-PATIENTS.

Free (including 9,423 accidents)		28,837
Recommended by subscribers		18,699
Out-Patients during the year		47,536
Total of patients in 1877	In-patients ..... 6,825 / Out-patients ... 47,536	... 54,361

Its income from endowments is less than 14,000*l.* a year. The (unavoidable) expenditure is 44,000*l.* a year.

Owing to the poverty of the districts surrounding the London Hospital, the deficiency can only be met by the liberality of the general public.

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The THIRD ANNUAL CONGRESS on the HEALTH and SEWAGE of TOWNS will be HELD on Wednesday and Thursday, May 22 and 23. Authors of papers which they wish to bring before either of the above meetings are requested to communicate at once with the Secretary, Society of Arts, John-street, Adelphi, W.C.

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